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ABSTRACT

The papers in this collection focus on both underlying theoretical principles of language teaching, learning, and research and exchanges of information between teachers and researchers. The following titles are included: "CALS at Carleton" (Janice Yalden); "Computers in the Teaching of Linguistics" (Jean-Pierre Paillet); "English in the Workplace: McDonald's Executive English" (Joyce Pagurek and Brigid Fitzgerald); "Subject Matter as Input for Beginners: A First Course in Italian for Students of Architecture" (Claudia Persi-Haines); "Needs Assessment Surveys" (Lynne Young); "Compiling Instructors' Perceptions for Learners' Deficiencies: A Problem Centered Approach to In-Service Training and Language Program Development" (Alister Cumming); "The Carleton University Writing Tutorial Service" (Aviva Freedman); "A Process Orientation in ESL Writing" (Devon Woods); "The Use of Reformulation in Teaching Writing to FSL Students" (Razika Sanaoui); and "Simulation or Reality? A Group Project in Writing" (Alister Cumming). (MSE)

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Carleton Papers in Applied Language Studies

Volume I, 1984

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Carleton Papers in Applied Language Studies: Volume I, 1984

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Preface

The title *Carleton Papers in Applied Language Studies* reflects a dual focus. The first is on underlying theoretical principles of language teaching, learning and research. The second is on exchanges of information among language teachers and researchers not only on English as a First and Second Language, but on other languages such as French and Italian.

The twofold focus of the *Papers* has evolved out of interests within the Centre for Applied Language Studies in which the approach to language education has been multifaceted. The Centre has pursued areas of research such as syllabus design for language courses in Arabic, Swedish, French and Italian, etc., writing research in English as a First and Second Language, Needs Analysis in French and English, Discourse study in English, and classroom-centered research.

Publication of the *Papers* was initiated by Janice Yalden, Director of CALS. The rationale was that we should share ideas on language education not only with members of CALS but with colleagues in other departments at Carleton University. This led to the idea of publishing a series of articles of interest to those outside as well as inside Carleton.

The first issue of the *Papers* contains articles not only from members of CALS, but from members of the Departments of Linguistics, Italian and French. It reflects the variety of interests at the Centre, covering areas such as writing research, approaches to language learning, needs analysis, and the role of computers in teaching linguistics.

We hope in future issues to include articles from colleagues outside Carleton on these and other areas of interest such

as thematic and content teaching, discourse analysis and its applications to language teaching, syllabus design, and evaluation. By continuing to invite articles from colleagues both within and outside Carleton University, we hope to provide a broad perspective on issues within language education.

While the editorial committee retains the right to select articles for inclusion in the *Papers*, it does not impose any copyright on those articles and reports which are published. Contributors are free to offer their work to other Journals or to publish separately.

We look forward to future issues in which we continue to exchange information in a field in which there is a great variety of approaches and research studies as well as frequent theoretical and practical innovations.

Lynne Young,
Editor

Editorial Introduction

Volume I

In this first issue, the articles focus on some of the key issues in language education. They were selected to reflect the range of interests in this field.

The *Papers* begins with Janice Yalden's article *CALS at Carleton* in which she discusses the structure and functions of the Centre for Applied Language Studies. In so doing, she presents a model which serves to coordinate a variety of concerns within the field of language education. The Centre investigates areas such as approaches to language teaching as well as language program design and applications of first and second language research.

In the second article, an interview with Jean-Pierre Paillet, *Computers in the Teaching of Linguistics*, he not only provides a rationale for and an explanation of the use of LOGO in Linguistics courses; more importantly, he raises crucial questions about the current as opposed to potential uses of computers in education. This leads his discussion towards a more fundamental examination of issues in education in general.

In the next section of the journal, four articles focus on aspects of program and course design. In Joyce Pagurek and Brigid Fitzgerald's article, *English in the Workplace: McDonald's Executive English*, they outline the steps by which a course for francophone employees of McDonald's was designed and taught. It begins with a discussion of the needs

assessment tools that were used; it goes on to describe the type of course that was designed to meet the identified needs. The examples of the types of activities as well as the evaluation instruments which are included in both the article and the appendices provide practical and innovative ideas for courses.

Claudia Persi-Haines's *Subject Matter as Input for Beginners: A First Course in Italian For Students of Architecture* is a descriptive account of the evolution of a beginning course in Italian to groups of architecture students who spend one term of their final year in Italy. In it she discusses the phases through which the course was developed in three successive offerings. Using the student profile compiled at the completion of the first course, she designed a course in which Italian was taught through architectural content. The positive and negative reactions to this content as well as the results of this type of teaching, which she describes in detail, contribute to the ongoing discussion of the design of Language for Specific Purposes Courses. The article is especially interesting because it is one of few reported on in the literature in which the language of such a course was other than English.

The question of course design has for the past ten to fifteen years involved the issue of needs assessment which is the focus of Lynne Young's article, *Needs Assessment Surveys*. The article evolved out of an assignment given to two advanced ESL classes in CALS. In tabulating the results of the survey it became evident that the results of this type of survey would have to be used in conjunction with other kinds of surveys. That is, given groups of students in which there is heterogeneity of language background as well as subject area of interest, the needs identified and reported on are so disparate that using the results as the sole input to course design produces problems that need to be considered. These problems led to musings on other types of surveys that could complement student self assessment.

Alister Cumming in his article, *Compiling Instructor's Perceptions of Learners' Deficiencies: A Problem-Centered Approach to In-Service Training and Language Program Development* approaches the question of program design through an in-service teacher training program. He focuses on the ways in which staff meetings can be organized as problem-solving sessions in which discussions of identified student problems can lead to the broader question of language learner needs and to teaching strategies to meet those needs. The approach he describes served two purposes: first, the problem-solving approach fostered an atmosphere in which inexperienced teachers could both share with and learn from more experienced staff members; second, it led to conscious attempts to relate identified needs to language instruction. As a result, not only did teachers receive in-service training but they also arrived at a consensus of opinion towards language instruction which in turn led to a more unified approach to course and program design.

The last four articles explore current approaches to the teaching of writing in first and second language contexts. Aviva Freedman's *The Carleton University Writing Tutorial Service* begins with a description of the history of the tutorial service. It then moves on to a discussion of the types of writing problems that native English speakers have. What makes this discussion both timely and valuable is that in it she dispels popular misconceptions about the nature of the problems students encounter. That is, she maintains that contrary to what most people think, the problems are not primarily grammar based but rather centre around pre-thinking and organizational difficulties, and furthermore these problems are inevitable as the material students work with at the university level becomes progressively more challenging. The approach to the teaching of writing then is based on the concept of writing as a process through which students internalize the strategies and modes of analysis of particular

disciplines. The focus on writing as a process in which students learn as they write has implications for the teaching of writing—from the pre-writing to the final editing stage. She identifies those stages of the process during which teachers can most usefully intervene and those in which the teacher should not. The paper concludes with an extensive description of the types of strategies and techniques the tutors in the Tutorial Service use during different stages of writing.

In Devon Woods' article, *A Process Orientation in ESL Writing*, he extends the focus on the process of writing in two ways. First he carries it into the field of ESL where first language research on writing is just beginning to be considered. Second, after defining the process approach he outlines how this approach translates into course objectives and classroom activities. His description of the units of a writing course includes activities which focus students' attention on different subprocesses involved in the writing process, as well as possible strategies for dealing with each. Included in the paper are several examples of materials he has used in this writing course.

Razika Sanaoui in her paper, *The Use of Reformulation in Teaching Writing to FSL Students* outlines the use of a new technique for working with the students' writing: reformulation. She outlines the teaching procedure she uses in teaching creative writing in French, and describes the six discourse features with which the reformulation technique is concerned. These features range from lexical choices to rhetorical stance. She concludes her paper with a description of the differences between the changes in better and poorer student papers.

In the final paper, *Simulation or Reality? A Group Project in Writing*, Alister Cumming outlines how a simulation which was devised to relate directly to foreign student interests and needs fosters the teaching of writing as a process. He discusses the ways in which the simulation encourages students

to focus on the stages of writing from the compilation of data to the final editing. The paper illustrates how a simulation overtly teaches the students to focus on each stage of the writing process, thus covertly demonstrating to the students exactly what is involved in writing. The description of the classroom activities takes the reader through a step-by-step process to illustrate more fully how one might approach the teaching of writing in second language contexts.

We hope that the articles in this first issue of the *Papers* will provoke interest and discussion among those involved in language education and that they will stimulate further development in the areas covered here as well as in related ones that we hope to address in future issues.

Lynne Young,
Editor

CALS at Carleton

Janice Yalden

*Centre for Applied Language Studies
and
Department of Linguistics*

The Centre for Applied Language Studies at Carleton University is a multifunctional unit. It is unusual among language centres in Canada in the breadth of its mandate and in the range of the languages being studied under its umbrella. Its establishment has been the result of a process of growth in a number of smaller units concerned with applied language studies, and of appreciation for their contributions to the university.

HISTORY

Work had begun early at Carleton to attend to the needs of students who required the knowledge of modern languages for communicative use. An extensive language laboratory was first established in 1964; this complex, with its specially equipped classrooms and excellent audio-visual equipment, was later renamed the Language Resource Centre. It began in 1981 (on the initiative of its then director, Dr. Peter J. Roster) to provide short-term courses in a number of modern languages which were not being taught by the university's departments of modern languages and literatures—Romanian,

for example, Arabic, Dutch, and many others as well. The Language Resource Centre thus began by serving students registered in credit language courses at Carleton through the presence of the laboratory facilities, and then reached out to members of the community—professionals, civil servants, diplomats—through its contract teaching. It is important to realize that CALS came to be established through a series of extensions of existing service activities.

Under the wing of the department of English, the Writing Tutorial Service came into being in 1974. It was established primarily to tutor Carleton students requiring improved skills in English to carry out the task of writing assignments for their credit courses in whatever discipline they were studying. Like the Language Resource Centre, it was a service unit, and like the LRC, had a separate budgetary existence from any other unit in the Faculty of Arts, which was home to both.

The third unit to appear on the scene which was also obviously concerned with applied language studies was the English language program for Venezuelan students. This unit prepared a set of non-credit courses in English as a Second Language especially for the Gran Mariscal de Ayacucho Scholarship Foundation of Venezuela. In 1976, Carleton received its first group of fifty-four Ayacucho scholarship holders who entered a year-long program of study in ESL as preparation for later academic studies in Canada. In 1977, the university decided to continue the intensive ESL courses which were something of a novelty at Carleton, and to open them to students from all over the world and from all parts of Canada as well. As the ESL unit evolved, the Department of Linguistics provided shelter for it, as the Department of English had done for the Writing Tutorial Service. Yet ESL too had a separate budget, and a separate Director—I was asked by the then Chair of the Department of Linguistics, Dr. William Cowan, to set up the ESL unit in 1976, and

continued to run it until 1979, when my colleague, Professor C. S. Jones, assumed the Directorship.

During the time that these units of the Faculty of Arts were establishing their roots, a group of faculty members representing all the modern language departments had come together to provide some consulting services to members of various ethnic groups in the Ottawa area. These groups were interested in improving the instruction in their own languages carried out in their community schools. The Multicultural Teaching Advisory Service (MTAS), as this group of faculty were known, began in 1979; through its work, and the work of the Language Resource Centre, the Writing Tutorial Service and the ESL unit, a number of functions which could form the basis for a larger unit became identified. At the same time, members of faculty involved with the three units and the MTAS became increasingly aware of the many opportunities for research and teaching connected with the services they were providing in applied language studies.

In the fall of 1979, Dr. Naomi Griffiths, Dean of Arts, announced the creation of a temporary administrative structure, which would encompass all three units together with the consulting on language teaching. This decision was taken partly in the interests of pursuing the benefits which the formation of a language centre might bring to Carleton, but also very much as a result of considerable administrative pressures on the three non-departmental units at a time when funding was becoming increasingly difficult. In January 1981, after the Faculty of Arts had endorsed an expanded proposal, Senate gave approval on an experimental basis. Subsequently, a special committee, chaired by Dr. B. A. McFarlane of the Department of Sociology, reported favourably on the work of the new Centre; final approval came from the Senate in June 1982, establishing the Centre as a permanent academic sub-unit of the Faculty of Arts, with its own Director, and with a Board of Management.

STRUCTURE

The preliminary model put forward for CALS included six broad functions, which also appear in the final report to Senate:

1. Research and Development—to include teacher training, materials development, and the encouragement of general research in the area of language acquisition and learning;
2. Consulting—for individuals and institutions wishing to use the services of the Centre: the consultancy will include needs analyses and testing, both diagnostic and proficiency;
3. The Development of Learning Options—in French as a Second Language, English as a Second Language, and in other second languages, viz.:
 - a. group options for second language learning,
 - b. individual options for second language learning,
 - c. contract arrangements for small groups in languages for specific purposes;
4. The Writing Tutorial Service;
5. Teacher Training—in association with Linguistics, all language departments, and the School of Continuing Education;
6. Teaching Support—through the Language Resource Centre:
 - a. administration of audio-visual facilities,
 - b. production of original material,
 - c. storage of material,
 - d. distribution of original material.

(Report to Senate from the Senate Academic Planning Committee, June 1982.)

FUNCTIONS

Instruction

Teaching Languages in the Centre is carried out in a number of different ways. The most substantial number of courses is given in English as a Second Language. Some of these are credit courses for Carleton students, but there is also a new series of intensive courses in ESL for university-bound students and professionals, as well as courses offered on demand for other specialized purposes. The Centre also has a flourishing Writing Tutorial Service (WTS) which offers free individual instruction for Carleton students on all aspects of essay writing in any discipline. While most of the students using the WTS are native speakers of English, there are some whose second language is English who also benefit from it. CALS also offers instruction in a great many other languages either through arrangements with the School of Continuing Education or on direct contract to agencies of the federal government, to industry, or to individuals. To date, we have offered non-credit courses in 30 languages. The summer of 84 is to see the initiation of intensive courses in Arabic and Mandarin.

Second Language Program Design

There are several stages of language program design which have received our attention: needs identification and curriculum design and specification; the preparation of pedagogical materials flowing from the design; the implementation of the design in the classroom; and finally, evaluation of the learners and the programs or courses. Some of the Centre's major projects carried out so far have been

- the analysis of French language needs among a sample of undergraduates at Carleton, a project funded by the Language Programs Branch, Department of the Secretary

of State, Government of Canada (Valden and Donaldson 1983);

- the design and writing of a communicative independent study course in English as a Second Language, on contract for Campion Language Studies of Toronto (to be published by Campion Language Studies, Toronto, Fall, 1984);
- the design and preparation of an approach to training teachers rapidly in communicative language teaching of any language;
- a needs analysis and pedagogical frameworks project for the Department of External Affairs, Government of Canada, for providing language training to commercial officers going on foreign postings.

In addition, there have been many other consultations of a less comprehensive, but no less interesting kind, carried out both in Ottawa and in other parts of Ontario. Another important involvement is the CONDAT testing project. CALS is represented on the Advisory Committee to the Project, which is charged with the responsibility of developing an Ontario test of ESL for post-admissions use in the colleges and universities of this province.

Course and Materials Design

This is, of course, a part of second language program design, but since it is such a large area and is continually in progress, we consider it to be somewhat separate. Ever since 1976, the Centre has been very interested in ESL for both academic and professional purposes. When working with English or other languages for specific purposes, problems of needs identification, of developing curriculum models and the implementation of these models in the form of actual courses remain a great challenge. Thematic and content teaching in ESL has been one important approach to curriculum design, and although several different interpretations have been worked out by various members of CALS, it constitutes a definite trend.

In addition to our on-campus ESL program, we have provided ESL courses to clients in the Ottawa area as well. One notable example of this work has been a course for francophone employees of McDonald's, known affectionately as 'McEnglish'. This course, which blends English with business practice, is reported on elsewhere in this issue of *Papers*, and is one example of what an LSP course can be.

For teachers of languages other than English, the approach taken by CALS has had to be somewhat different. Because CALS offers a multiplicity of languages and employs a large number of part-time teachers we decided not to try to develop courses in each and every language to meet each and every set of needs and purposes, but rather to attack the problem of course development through the provision of teacher training in communicative approaches to language teaching. The Frameworks Project is the outcome of the labours of a sizeable group of researchers, materials writers and teachers, who worked throughout the academic year 1983-84 to produce a series of booklets (to be published by CALS, Spring, 1984) which will be used in short courses commencing this spring. The frameworks are not at all language specific. They concentrate on content at the semantic level, rather than on linguistic form. Our approach is inspired by the *Threshold Level*, starting with the ideas and concepts and then moving to the linguistic forms, the cultural background, and what is socially appropriate. The frameworks provided for the Department of External Affairs will also be used in teacher training for more advanced and specialised courses in a number of languages. The entire approach represents a fresh perspective in program design as well as in teacher training.

Research and Development

Our research program in second languages demonstrates our collective concern with language development for the purpose of functional communication, and justifies our member-

ship in the world-wide network of LSP centres (see Hoedt *et al.* 1981). This type of language development is to be brought about through a focus primarily on tasks which are beneficial to acquisition of the kind and range of language required, and which need not be tasks or activities concerned with the overt study of language forms—in other words, through communicative approaches to language learning and teaching. Furthermore, since most of our work is with language development in adults, rather than in children, we are also very much aware of the need for the learner to be able to take at least some responsibility for his/her own learning trajectory and goals in the process.

The research program in English first language development centres on writing research. Just as teaching in the Writing Tutorial Service focuses on the development of the ability to think and organize one's thoughts through the composing process so the writing research connected with the Centre involves investigation into the cognitive processes entailed in composing.

A word about writing research in ESL courses for university-bound international students. Often students in ESL come from educational backgrounds very different from that of Canada: sometimes they have not learned to compose in their first language, let alone a second; for others, the rhetorical patterns they have learned differ significantly from those of English. Yet all must learn to write acceptable academic prose if they are to succeed in our colleges and universities.

Thus, CALS has a research and development stream covering basic research, course design, materials development, and teacher training approaches for English first and second language.

FUTURE DIRECTIONS

Work will continue in the areas outlined above; fresh starts

are being undertaken as well. For example, changes in the use of technology are already being planned in the lab complex, and we can expect much interest in computers in language research and teaching in future years. The notion of needs analysis is going to be developed further; better definitions of what is to be identified and analysed, and better tools with which to do it are both required. More investigation of the contexts of language use, especially among immigrants, is contemplated—this is certainly an important field, which will require interdisciplinary teams to handle the complexities involved. There is no doubt that the university situation in such a rich linguistic environment provides ample opportunities for field research. CALS hopes too to extend its contacts with other parts of the university, since the kinds of studies it carries out and the kinds of teaching it provides can so well respond to the needs of other academic units at Carleton. We would also like to foster contacts with language centres and teacher training centres in order to keep abreast of developments in applied language studies in Canada and elsewhere in the world.

Finally, the results of our research and development must, if they are to have any effect, be disseminated. After 4 years of very intensive activity, CALS has an excellent record in this field. A number of articles in scholarly journals and several books have been published by the faculty; now it is time to begin to publish our own papers, which will be an important vehicle both in making our own work known, and in continuing to forge the links which will enable us to carry out a unified plan of research in applied language studies.

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*Computers
in the
Teaching of Linguistics*

An Interview with

Jean-Pierre Paillet

*Department of Linguistics
Carleton University*

Q. Professor Paillett, for the past couple of years now you've been using the computer in fourth year courses in Linguistics at Carleton University. Do you want to talk a little bit about how you were using the computer in these courses?

J-P. P. Yes. I started working with LOGO by myself and becoming acquainted with the basic principles of it, and so on. Over the summer of '82 I decided it was time to do something a little bit more practical. So I arranged to use the Experimental Linguistics seminar to acquaint students with LOGO. The point of the course was not to teach them how to program, however, but rather, first to expose them to a way of thinking which I thought was relevant to thinking about language and second, to expose them to an instrument which could be useful in doing experimental linguistics. The difficulty in talking about this is always the same, mainly that with regards

to language LOGO or any other kind of language is both the instrument for doing experiments and the model of the object. That is, the structure of LOGO in many ways is the same as the structure of natural languages. At the same time one can use LOGO in a very efficient fashion for doing experiments on syntax and semantics. So, in the first term that I used it, the emphasis was on getting students to practice a certain way of thinking, what one might call procedural thinking, as opposed to other kinds of thinking which we don't have names for. This is inspired by Seymour Papert, and the common reference for all that is *Mindstorms* in which he introduces the idea that people develop skills and aptitudes according to what their environment gives them models for. And if their environment doesn't offer many opportunities to become aware of procedural thinking, then you may very well have procedural thinking but you don't have mastery of it because you never have reflexive consciousness of it. And so essentially the idea of LOGO is to provide an environment in which you have to have reflexive consciousness of procedural thinking, in order to practice it in a conscious manner and get mastery of it. And naturally in order to understand how language works one has to have mastery of procedural thinking. So that was the point of the course.

Q. You keep referring to LOGO specifically. How does LOGO differ from other computer languages?

J-P. P. Ah, a good question. LOGO is a cousin of LISP. LISP was the first successful list processing language. Between these and other languages there is a fundamental difference in structure—and naturally in implementation, because the structure determines implementation—and in the relationship of the program-

ming language to the object it works on. In most programming languages, the programs are objects of a totally different nature from what they work on. For instance, if you use FORTRAN or BASIC you have commands that operate on numbers or that operate on strings or other objects. And the commands themselves are not numbers or strings, or whatever; they are a different kind of object. In LISP or LOGO, the representation of the commands is of the same form as the objects they operate on, namely lists. So this introduces a uniformity into the whole way of thinking. One thinks of the data structures, i.e. the objects being operated on, and the control structures, i.e. the programs, in the same way. One can actually have data structures and control structures interacting in homogenous fashion. One of the consequences of that is that the language is not preset. In BASIC or FORTRAN you have a number of basic units which are the available commands and all you can do is string them together in various ways and that's all there is to it. In LISP or LOGO or other list-processing languages, the way you define an operation is by giving a list of sub-operations; each of them is called a procedure. And each sub-operation is itself a list of sub-operations, and so on. The result is the list structure. Now the things you work on also are list structures, so that you think of the two in the same way. Now, I don't know where to go further with that.

Q. Except to ask why that is a particular advantage in terms of what you were working with—natural language. What's the particular advantage?

J-P. P. Ah good. One fundamental property of language is that it has what you might call a layered structure. If you do an immediate constituent analysis,

you recognize at a sort of coarse level of analysis that a sentence is made up of a noun phrase and a verb phrase, or a subject and a verb, or something like that, whatever terms you use. And then when you look at the inner structure of each of these components of immediate constituents, you find that they're organized in the same way, and so on. That is, the organization of any level you choose is of the same nature. Now a list is an ideal representation for immediate constituent structure. And naturally each of the elements of a list itself is a list, and so on, so that there is a direct correspondence between list structure and immediate constituent analysis, for instance. But further than that, when you describe an operation as a list of sub-operations, some of the sub-operations may have exactly the same structure as the whole thing. This is what we call recursivity. Now recursivity is one of the fundamental properties of natural language. From a formal point of view, you can only observe it. From the point of view of asking yourself questions about why language is the way it is, you might wonder, why is language recursive, what function does that serve? Now when you study a list-processing language, you can figure out exactly what function recursion serves in the list-processing language. And then you can report back the results of your inquiry. This sort of thing is right on the surface of LOGO or LISP. It can be implemented in other languages, but it is an artificial thing that you introduce, and therefore you have to think of it. With LISP or LOGO it is something that is presented to you directly and that you can use with it.

- Q. To get back to the course, what is your overall assessment at this particular point of the course? What do you think that the students were able to get in

terms of their understanding of language that they would not have been able to get otherwise?

- J-P. P. There's nothing that you need the computer to get. So in that sense, the answer to your question is "nothing special". But one of the primary differences is that students had to act, were involved directly, and could gauge the results of their own actions. It is, you might say, an interactive type of learning, instead of an absorptive type of learning. Now this depends very much on the attitude and the initiative of the students. In the first term of last year, fall of '82, I had an extremely active group of students, and they jumped on it and they made it their own. In the fall of this year I haven't had the same kind of success in the sense that the students were not as ready to make the thing their own as they were in the year before. Within the limitation that this brought, I think that I would put across a number of basic concepts, recursion is one, but there are others which are more technical in nature, such as the concept of register, the notion of a unit, and things like that, which I can now refer to in the second term, when I'm doing experimental linguistics, and use directly talking about language using terms which are inherited from computer science. I inform them, say, that linguistics and computer science are the same thing, that the difference is one of method of approach and not one of subject matter. And so I want to import into linguistics all the acquisitions of computer science.

- Q. You're obviously very interested in the whole issue of the computer and education. What are your feelings about the way it's being utilized right now as opposed to its potential?

- J-P. P. Well, I can't speak specifically, first because I don't

believe I'm very competent and second because it might not be polite; however, on the whole, the computer is being used mainly to take up the tasks that teachers are bored with, and if the teachers are bored with them, imagine the students. So in a way the computer is being used to reinforce the poorest aspects of instruction. The promise and the difficulty with computer education is that the sorts of things the computer could support are very subversive. Further, it is probable that the students who would be faced with those things would be much more competent at them right away than the teacher. So there are social implications and status implications and things like that which are very difficult to deal with.

Q. How about the potential subversiveness of the computer in education?

J-P. P. Well, I would rather refer you to Seymour Papert and the various things he said in a nice and polite, and very suggestive, way. Here is my little contribution. It is the word "education" itself which has been subverted, because most of the things called education are not education, but indoctrination. I understand the etymology of "education" to be 'to draw out'; however, the task given to most teachers is not to draw out, but to pound in! And most education is this practice. So the thing with computer education is that you can use the computer to pound in more stuff, or you can leave it open-ended. I believe the buzz-word is divergent vs. convergent instruction. I've never been able to do anything but divergent learning myself, so I find it very difficult to imagine someone really learning in a convergent fashion. And that's the thing. Even with LOGO, which is only the first bit, the first demonstration of what

computer education could be like—even with LOGO, which is very limited and so on—one cannot grasp the implications within two weeks of introducing it to students. They go all over the place. And this requires a totally different approach and attitude on the part of the teacher, because you can no longer be the one who has the authority, the one who gives the assignments, or anything like that. The teacher can be only a resource person, and, as a resource person, has to be very humble, because within a few days of mastering the rudiments of LOGO, a student can come up with questions that the teacher doesn't have answers to. I think in that sense it's very subversive because it will either be totally suppressed or it will demand of teachers a totally different attitude to their job, and it will accustom the students from the very beginning to expect totally different things from the teacher—not authority, not know-it-all, but openness and ability and willingness to take on something new, and a complete dissolving of subject-matter boundaries. Something that you learn in your mathematics class may become relevant to geography and things like that.

Q. Would you say that there is a major difference between LOGO and other languages in that LOGO encourages this kind of divergence as opposed to other languages?

J-P. P. Yes. Certainly. In BASIC, to mention the reigning model, you have a repertoire of commands which is given to you and that is all you can do. That is exactly the same thing as having those eight subjects—6 periods a day, 8 subjects—and that's the way it is. It's pigeon-holed to begin with. In LOGO, there's no such thing. BASIC defines the type of data that can be operated on before you start. LOGO has only

one type of data—that is lists—and you decide what your lists are going to represent. This is one of the first things my students had to learn last year and I noticed it was a bit baffling to them. I would write on the board something and I would say: “Well, look, this is a tree. Now, what’s a tree?” and it took quite a while for it to dawn on them that a tree was a certain kind of list. And now “this is a table,” and it took them just as much time to find out that a table was another kind of list and once they got the hang of it after two or three puzzling trials, then they saw everything as lists. The only thing that remained was how best, how most efficiently to represent something by a list and then everything was theirs and they could do what they wanted. I remember a particular case with one of my students ... I had told them “you must come up with your own projects, because I don’t want to force you to do things. I want you to know what you want to do.” And this student came up and said, “I want to program a Hangman game”; so I said “fine, let’s go and do it.” It was 2:30 in the afternoon. We finished it past midnight, but we’d gone through all different sorts of projects, all represented as lists, all compatible with each other, and a bunch of procedures connected together in the appropriate way that would transport the information, and the game was actually a Hangman game. It would take a word—you had to put in some vocabulary—and it would give you the usual choice and the usual information and keep track of how you were doing. If you won, it responded to you in the appropriate fashion, challenged you to another game, and then if you lost, it gave you the appropriate scathing remarks. And that took ten hours from scratch, from knowing nothing about how to go

about it ... And LOGO is actually only the beginning. I've been using LOGO because that's what's available, but I see all sorts of "game grammars" as an extension of LOGO. The way LOGO is organized is that at any point it keeps track of how deep it has gotten itself from the starting point. The main fundamental property of LOGO is that it is self-recursive, so that at any particular point, if you give an instruction which names a particular procedure, it stops everything, keeps track of where it was and pretends that the only thing that exists in the world is that particular procedure. When it's finished, it erases all the information that's relevant only to the inside of the procedure, and returns whatever result was required. So that at any given moment, the LOGO system knows only one thing and that is, what it is doing now. "Game grammars" work the same way. This is called procedural organization, and anything which can be implemented in an augmented transmission network, or extended finite state automaton, can be implemented in that fashion. This illustrates one important principle in computer science, introduced a few years ago. It's called the principle of information hiding—that is, information should be available only where it is necessary. Otherwise you get things tangled up and mixed up. This is another thing that BASIC doesn't do. Basic has the information all over the place, and it's available everywhere. So that BASIC programs can become extremely tangled. Pascal was the first language introduced which forced information hiding. It forces it at the expense of flexibility. Whereas lists for LOGO make it a natural thing and do not do it at the expense of flexibility. So the implementation of a game grammar will have the same principle at the core, and very often when

I am working with my students, I have flashes of what it would be like if I had a game grammar of a more general type than just LOGO. And that's the direction I want to go in. I could do the same thing in a more flexible fashion, if I had something more general than LOGO, and my thinking on the subject has been the result of the convergence of what I was thinking about grammars of languages and my practice with LOGO.

English in the Workplace: McDonalds Executive English

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The McDonalds Executive English Course was developed and taught by the authors. It was a 45-hour, 10-week program designed to improve oral proficiency. The students were a group of francophone McDonalds managers and assistant managers. This paper describes 1) the background, 2) the needs assessment tools, and 3) the design and implementation of the course.

1. Background

The Centre for Applied Language Studies contracted to provide the McDonalds Executive English Course. This was in response to an inquiry by a McDonalds supervisor for a course in English for himself and a colleague. CALS suggested that it would be possible to provide a custom-designed McDonalds course if numbers warranted. A group of nine students registered. Because of their very heavy work schedules, students could only devote one evening a week to the course. As a result, each weekly four and a half hour class was divided into two sessions. All concerned realized that condensing instruction in this way was less than optimal. This was somewhat offset by having each session taught by

a different instructor.

The course differed from the usual workplace course in two ways: 1) The client was the student, not the company. Although the company supported the course by paying the students' fees and providing the premises, equipment, etc., CALS was not accountable to the company. The students attended classes on their own and not company time. 2) The course was given at a McDonalds facility which was not, in fact, the workplace of any of the students. Because the students worked in various parts of the city, this location was chosen for its centrality.

2.1. Needs Assessment

In order to plan a program tailored for this particular group of students, information was needed in three areas:

- English language use on the job
- level of English proficiency (beginning, intermediate or advanced)
- the students as people (their personality characteristics, backgrounds and goals for the course).

To get this information four tools were used:

- a. observation
- b. a questionnaire
- c. language tests
- d. individual interviews

a) In the week preceding the course, the instructors spent a day observing "on the job". This provided valuable information. For example, information about language functions, structures and lexis was obtained by observing/taking notes at a meeting of English-speaking managers. Information about managers' responsibilities in the areas of staff, restaurant operation and the physical plant came from both an informal discussion over lunch with a group of managers, and from a visit to a restaurant under construction. Information about reading and writing requirements was obtained

from samples of reading materials (eg. employee handbooks, in-house magazines, job application forms, job descriptions, etc.) and writing tasks (eg. statements of goals and objectives, action plans, performance reviews, reports, letters to customers, etc.)

All these sources of information gave an insight into the McDonalds work environment, the management philosophy (Management by Objectives), the company style (very informal) and the tasks managers had to accomplish. This information was then used as the basis for the second tool, the questionnaire.

b) The purpose of the questionnaire was to find out the students' perceptions of their English language use on the job. The questions dealt with language functions, role relationships, mode, channel, topics, and students' expectations from the course. (See Appendix A.)

c) To determine the students' proficiency level, two kinds of test materials were used: a standard grammar test (C.E.L.T.) consisting of 75 multiple choice questions on discrete points of grammar, and test materials created by the authors relating specifically to the McDonalds workplace. The latter included tests of reading, writing, and listening. The reading test consisted of comprehension questions on three passages, graded from short to longer, and specific to general; namely, a phone message, a letter of complaint, and a reading passage from a management text. (See Appendix B.) The writing test was based on the kind of writing McDonalds employees had to do: respond to a letter of complaint or write a performance review of a crew member whose profile was provided. (See Appendix C.) The listening test was in two parts:

- discrimination of numbers, dates, prices, percentages, quantities, weights and measures
- comprehension of a taped conversation.

d) The students' listening skills in face-to-face conver-

sation were further evaluated in individual interviews.

The individual interviews served two purposes: to assess listening and speaking skills, and to get to know the students—their personal characteristics, educational backgrounds, language learning experience and attitudes, and goals for the course. These interviews were not structured but were carried on as an informal conversation.

2.2 Results of the Needs Assessment

The students' responses to the questionnaire reinforced the results of the observation session; i. e. their perceptions of their language needs suggested that all the functions identified on the questionnaire were potential teaching points.

The results of the C.E.L.T. test revealed that these speakers had the problems with structures experienced by most French speakers (e.g. irregular past tense forms, present perfect, etc.) The reading and listening tests seemed to show that the students' skills in these areas were adequate for their work related needs. Although the writing test indicated that improvement was needed, responses to the questionnaire suggested that for all but one student, writing improvement was not a high priority. Conversely, although the assessment of their speaking abilities based on the interviews indicated that all but one communicated adequately, *all* the students felt a need for improvement in this area. This need was expressed almost unanimously as a desire to "feel more comfortable" when using English whether in day-to-day activities on the job, when dealing with head-office or when speaking at meetings.

The students themselves shared many characteristics. Most of them had completed high school where they had studied English. Their further education had been within the McDonalds management training program. They appeared competitive, energetic, willing, extremely hard-working, and very achievement-oriented. They were accustomed to having

to evaluate their own performance as well as that of others. Despite these similarities, however, in the area of oral proficiency in English, the level of the group ranged from a beginner through intermediate to the very advanced.

3.1 Design and Implementation of the Course

The information provided by the needs assessment, the observations and the interviews determined the content of the course, the approach and the presentation of the material. Based on the results, a list of priorities was established for the teaching of linguistic form and function. The degree of commitment of the students to their work suggested a thematic approach based on work-related topics, e. g. Stress, Advertising, Women in Business, Interviewing Techniques, How to Run an Effective Meeting, How to Conduct Performance Evaluations, etc. These themes served as the point of integration for the different segments of the course, i.e. the vocabulary, grammar and functions. Finally, the expressed need of the students for oral proficiency required an oral focus for each segment of the course.

3.2 Organizing the Teaching Points

At this stage there were, on the one hand, lists of priority structures, functions, etc. , and on the other, reading selections on a number of themes. Items on the priority list seemed to fall into three categories:

- a) those which surfaced in the readings, e. g. comparatives and superlatives of adjectives in readings on advertising;
- b) those which, although not intrinsic to the readings, could be related through an activity, e. g. conditionals in a questionnaire for the thematic unit, Women in Business (see Appendix D);
- c) those for which new themes had to be selected, e.g. future tense in Planning an Advertising Campaign.

Because the students' primary goal was "to feel more comfortable" when speaking English, interactive activities were

devised for each segment of the course. Examples of these activities included the following:

I *Grammar*: To practice "would rather + (verb)/prefer + (verb)ing", students were directed to find out from other class members their preferences concerning different leisure activities.

II *Vocabulary Activities*: To develop the strategy of guessing meaning from context, students worked in pairs or small groups and discussed which of several dictionary definitions for a given word best suited the context.

III *Reading Activities*: To ensure that each student needed to speak, students were divided into three groups of three. Each group had a different reading text on the same theme with accompanying comprehension questions. Their task was to jointly answer the questions. They were then regrouped so that each group of three now had a representative from each previous group. (See diagram below.)

First grouping:

A	B	C
A A	B B	C C

Second grouping:

A	A	A
B C	B C	B C

The task in the second grouping was to share the information obtained in the texts. There was now a real information gap—each participant had to report on what he had read in order to inform the others. This procedure proved particularly effective for the beginning student, and it was with great pride that the rest of the class realised that "their" beginner was now contributing.

IV *Consolidation Activities*: To provide a realistic context for using grammar, vocabulary, etc. studied in the

session, interactions were devised in the form of role plays and problem-solving activities. These activities paralleled the students' actual work, e.g. evaluating job applications, conducting performance reviews, developing action plans, etc. (See Appendix E.) Because the students were accustomed to working within a framework of goals, objectives and action plans, they were given, at the first session, a clear statement of goals and objectives for the course in terms of pronunciation, vocabulary-building, grammar, speaking/listening, reading, etc. They were also provided with reasonable expectations of achievement: given the brevity of the course, the aim was an *awareness* of problems, and strategies for dealing with them. (See Appendix F.) In addition, at the beginning of each class students received the goals and objectives for each lesson in the form of an agenda for the evening.

Evaluation

At the end of the 10 weeks, students were given the same C.E.L.T. grammar test, with inconclusive results. Unfortunately, because of time constraints, it was impossible to create a functional test. However since the students' stated goal was "to feel more comfortable" when speaking English, an evaluation form was designed (see Appendix G) to determine their perceptions. Despite their recognition of the limitations imposed by the length of the class and the wide range of proficiency levels, the students expressed satisfaction.

A year later, an independent evaluation was carried out by June Tagg, a student in the CTESL program at Carleton. As part of an assignment, she interviewed, by telephone, three of the students from the course: the basic level student, one of the intermediate students, and the advanced student who requested the course. She reports the following:

The beginning student was able to comprehend and respond to questions, often volunteering details and illustrations, during a half hour telephone conversation. He reports watching television more, and struggling to learn computer English on his own. The other two students were using English much more on

the job. One was planning to give an oral presentation in English the following week. Both these students have English-speaking employees under their supervision and were switching languages with comparative ease and comfort. Both planned to take further English courses this year. One hoped for an English course geared for two or three people at his own competence level; the other said he would enroll at Carleton University. All three students say they knew they were better able to use the English language as a result of the course and they felt very good about that.

NEEDS ANALYSIS

Four answers to the following questions will enable your teachers to plan an English course that will meet your needs in English.

The questions relate to your use of language at work, whether this language is French or English. If you work in English at the moment, your answers will tell us what aspects of English you need now (e.g. points of grammar, vocabulary, etc.). If you are working in French at the moment, but there is a possibility that you will have to work in English in the future, your answers will tell us what you will need to know. Read the questions carefully and consider your answers.

1. In doing your job, do/will you have to do any of the following:

	NEXT	SOMETIMES	OFTEN	ALWAYS
1. Ask someone to do something				
2. Ask someone for information				
3. Tell someone what to do				
4. Tell someone how to do something				
5. Tell someone what happened				
6. Tell someone what is going to happen				
7. Tell someone what someone else said				
8. Make suggestions				
9. Ask for suggestions				
10. Make someone accept your ideas				
11. Insist that someone do something				
12. Remind someone about something				
13. Say what you think				
14. Ask others what they think				
15. Say how you feel				
16. Ask others how they feel				

17. Say that you disagree with someone
18. Say that you agree with someone
19. Warn someone about something
20. Give someone advice
21. Encourage someone
22. Apologize to someone
23. Accept an apology from someone
24. Tell someone he/she has done something wrong
25. Offer to do something
26. Say that something is possible/impossible
27. Say that you are satisfied with someone/something
28. Say that you are not satisfied with someone/something
29. Congratulate someone
30. Say "Hello", "Goodbye", "How are you?" etc. to someone
31. Talk about prices
32. Talk about days/dates
33. Talk about times
34. Talk about weights and measures
35. Talk about percentages

11. a. what is your position?

Supervisor

Manager

Assistant Manager

Other (give details)

[illegible]

APPENDIX A

Needs Analysis

II. b. To do your job, do you have to communicate with:

	NEVER	SOMETIMES	OFTEN	ALWAYS
Operations Manager				
Supervisors				
Managers				
Assistant Managers				
Crew members				
Other McDonald's employees (Secretaries, etc.)				
Customers				
Other business people				

III. a. When you communicate with the following people, do you do so by speaking to them?

	NEVER	SOMETIMES	OFTEN	ALWAYS
Operations Manager				
Supervisors				
Managers				
Assistant Managers				
Crew Members				
Other McDonald's employees				
Customers				
Other business people				

III. b. Do you have to communicate with the following people by writing to them?

	NEVER	SOMETIMES	OFTEN	ALWAYS
Operations Manager				
Supervisors				
Managers				
Assistant Managers				
Crew members				
Other McDonald's employees				
Customers				
Other business people				

IV. a. To do your job, do you have to read:

	NEVER	SOMETIMES	OFTEN	ALWAYS
Memos				
Telephone messages				
Letters				
Reports				
Evaluations				
Magazine articles				
Operating instructions				
Procedures				
Other material				

IV. a. To do your job, do you have to talk to people

	NEVER	SOMETIMES	OFTEN	ALWAYS
Individually				
In a group				

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b. Do you have to talk to people

	NEVER	SOMETIMES	OFTEN	ALWAYS
Face to face				
On the telephone				

v. At work, do you talk to your co-workers about

	NEVER	SOMETIMES	OFTEN	ALWAYS
Work				
Outside interests in general				
- movies / TV				
- sport				
- politics / current affairs				
- family matters				
- hobbies				
- personal problems				
- other				

xi. What do you hope to get out of this course?

READING TEST

Name: _____

PART I

Read the message below.

McDonald's
Telephone Message

To: Mr. Smith
From: Mr. Gordon
Telephone No. _____

☐ Please call.
☐ Will call again.
☐ Returned your call.
☒ Wants to see you.
☐ Long distance - call operator number _____

Particulars of Call

Mr. Gordon from the Ottawa Citizen
calling 15 minutes on September 19 at
3 o'clock about an article on McDonald's
part in the Santa Claus parade.

Date: Sept. 19/12
Time: 1:30 pm JS
INITIALS

Write T (True) or F (False) beside each statement.

- Mr. Smith works at McDonald's. _____
- Mr. Smith called Mr. Gordon. _____
- Mr. Gordon came to see Mr. Smith. _____
- Mr. Gordon works for the Ottawa Citizen. _____
- Mr. Gordon wants to see Mr. Smith next week. _____

Read the letter below. Then circle the correct answer to the questions which follow.

1930 Main St.,
Ottawa, K1M 3J2
January 5, 1981

J. B. Smith,
Manager,
McDonald's Ltd.,
St.,
Ottawa, Ontario.

Dear Mr. Smith:

I visited your restaurant at noon on Sunday, January 2, and was very disappointed. I was especially upset because we had visitors from overseas with us.

The parking lot was messy -- the garbage cans were overflowing. Inside, things were just as bad. There was a very long line-up because the girl at the cash couldn't cope with the crowd. Obviously, she was overworked and didn't have enough assistance. When we finally ordered, there was a long delay because the fish filets were not ready. Although we were extremely hungry by the time we got our lunch, we couldn't eat it because the buns were stale. I didn't say anything at the time because there seemed to be no one in charge.

I thought McDonald's wanted its customers to come back. This customer won't return.

Sincerely,
fours truly,

QUESTIONS

- In this letter, Mrs. Jones is a) making a complaint.
b) saying thank you.
c) asking for information.
- She a) enjoyed her visit to McDonald's.
b) didn't enjoy her visit to McDonald's.
- Mrs. Jones came a) alone.
b) with one person.
c) with more than one person.
- The parking lot was a) clean.
b) dirty.
c) full.
- In the restaurant there were a) a lot of customers.
b) a few customers.
c) some customers.
- At the cash, the girl didn't have enough a) hamburgers.
b) help.

APPENDIX B
Reading Test

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APPENDIX C
Writing Test

33

Name _____

Do either question A or question B.

You may use an English-English dictionary.

- A. Read Mrs. Jones' letter again (Reading Test Part II) and write a reply.

or

- B. Read about the crew member, Phil Jackson, below and write a performance review based on the information.

Phil Jackson

- has worked at McDonald's for two months
- is very enthusiastic about the job
- wants to make a career at McDonald's
- sometimes uses incorrect procedures because he thinks he can work faster that way
- makes many suggestions
- appearance is sometimes untidy. His hair has grown until it overlaps his collar
- has already learned to work 4 stations
- his uniform is often wrinkled. Sometimes he wears brightly coloured socks.
- is never late for work
- sometimes wears his name-tag upside down
- once, forgot to call in sick
- doesn't take correction very well

APPENDIX D

Introductory Activity

INTRODUCTORY ACTIVITY - WOMEN AND WORK

- A. Make on a scale of 1 - 5 how comfortable you would feel in each of the situations below:

- | | |
|-----------------------|---------------------|
| 1. very uncomfortable | 4. comfortable |
| 2. uncomfortable | 5. very comfortable |
| 3. indifferent | |

How would you feel if:

- B. the auto mechanic working on your car were a woman?
1 2 3 4 5
- C. the person who came to fix your fridge were female?
1 2 3 4 5
- D. the person repairing your snowblower were a woman?
1 2 3 4 5
- E. a woman were hired as the head chef at your favorite restaurant?
1 2 3 4 5
- F. the technician who arrived to service your computer were female?
1 2 3 4 5
- G. your new boss were a woman?
1 2 3 4 5
- H. the lawyer that was recommended to you were a woman?
1 2 3 4 5
- I. the new doctor turned out to be female?
1 2 3 4 5
- J. the dentist you have to go to were a woman?
1 2 3 4 5
- K. the real estate agent showing you a house were female?
1 2 3 4 5

8. Now compare your feelings with your partner's. Discuss why you feel the way you do in each situation.

APPENDIX E

Interaction

INTERACTION

You are a member of the Board of a new French conglomerate which is taking over Robertsons Ltd., a smaller, old, established company. You want to make the changeover as smooth as possible. You have to consider the potential problems arising from the following circumstances:

- some executives will lose their jobs
- some will have to take an early retirement
- others will be reclassified
- several will stay on in the same positions but at a lower salary
- some employees will have to relocate because the less productive branches of Robertsons will be closed down. Many of these people will be offered jobs with your head office which is in a French-speaking part of the country. In fact, 75% of the population speak French
- some of the machinery at Robertsons will be replaced with new computerized equipment; therefore, many people will need retraining. Your training programs are in French
- the employees at Robertsons belong to a different union

You have decided that the way to make the changeover successful is to minimize stress. Discuss the problems which might arise and the stress factors involved; then develop your action plan.

Be prepared to give either a written or oral report.

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COURSE DESCRIPTION

This communicative language course will cover the following areas:

1. Pronunciation:

Final-s, n, th

English word - and sentence - stress

English intonation patterns

2. Vocabulary Building

New words

Prefixed and suffixed

Synonyms

Deducing meaning from context

3. Grammar

Individualized Grammar Review

4. Speaking/Listening

Social

-

in pairs

Business

-

in small groups

in large groups

5. Reading

Business

-

General topics

-

As stimulus to
discussion

EXPECTATIONS

In a 45-hour course, you can expect to achieve the following:

Pronunciation:

1. Awareness of the sounds which cause problems for French speakers.
2. The ability to make the sounds correctly on request.
3. The correct production of the sounds in conversation some of the time.

Vocabulary:

1. A moderate increase in your productive vocabulary.
2. A large increase in your receptive vocabulary.
3. Mastery of strategies which will enable you to cope with unknown words.

Grammar

1. An awareness of points of grammar which cause problems for all Francophones.
2. An awareness of your own grammatical problems.
3. The ability to produce grammatically correct statements on request.
4. The ability to produce spontaneous grammatically correct statements some of the time (for intermediate level students) or much of the time (for advanced students).

Speaking

More confidence in large and small groups.

COURSE EVALUATION

Write your answers in English or French.

1. Do you feel more comfortable now speaking English than you felt before this course?
2. Do you need more confidence?
3. Do you think you make fewer mistakes now than you made before?
 - (a) Do you think you communicate more effectively now?
 - (b) Are you satisfied with your level of communication in English?
4. When you communicate in English, do you use:
 - (a) the vocabulary you learned in class?
 - (b) the grammar you learned in class?
 - (c) the pronunciation you learned in class?
5. Which of the following would you prefer?
 - (a) 4 1/2 hours once a week
 - (b) 3 hours once a week
 - (c) 3 hours twice a week
 - (d) 2 hours twice a week
6. Which of these was the most useful to you?
 - (a) grammar
 - (b) pronunciation/stress
 - (c) vocabulary
 - (d) reading
 - (e) interactions

COURSE EVALUATION

7. Which kind of interactions did you prefer?
 - (a) 2 people
 - (b) 3 people
 - (c) 4 people
 - (d) the whole class
8. What did you like best about the course?
9. What did you like least?
10. Was there anything in the course that disappointed you?
If yes, say what it was.
11. Was there anything in the course that surprised you?
If yes, say what it was.
12. What improvements do you suggest for this course?
13. If you continue studying English, what would you like in your next course?
14. Comments, suggestions, complaints, criticism.

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Subject Matter as Input for Beginners:

*A First Course in Italian for Students of Architecture
(A Working Paper)*

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This is a descriptive paper, not based on a theoretical model, but concerned with an investigation. The paper records my discoveries as I made them, and reproduces my teaching strategies as they developed in response to perceptions of needs. It contains a chronological account of an investigation in second language acquisition that I have been conducting for three years at Carleton University. The basic assumption for my investigation was that a second language is best acquired when it is used as a vehicle rather than an object of study, and when the course content is focused on material drawn from the students' field of study (previous knowledge). My approach, therefore, relates to Krashen's ideas, especially his sensible reinvention of 'comprehensibility' of input (Krashen 1981).

Background

The DSA (Directed Studies Abroad) program was started by the Carleton School of Architecture in 1981. The program involves a group of approximately twenty architecture stu-

dents who spend the first term of their fourth year in Rome. In Italy the students attend architecture courses taught in English by Carleton instructors; students live together in a pensione, and share studio space. No interaction with Italian professors or students is required, therefore Italian instruction is not a prerequisite for the DSA program.

The Italian course was a last-minute request, so that course needs were never determined by the School of Architecture, nor were they clearly perceived by the students electing to take Italian. Determining the needs and the objectives was left entirely to the instructor. In other words, it was the case that "whoever determines needs largely determines which needs are determined." (Chambers 1980: 27.)

Phase One: DSA 82

I started to teach my first cohort of students with ad hoc material, and a vast range of strategies: a syllabus that could be loosely described as notional/functional/situational. The main objective was to provide the students with minimal competence in Italian, so that they could perform a very limited set of roles and tasks in a very limited amount of situations. I knew that in Rome students would live, work, attend courses together; that group activities and instruction would isolate them from the Italian-speaking environment; that the use of Italian, in their particular situation, would be required very seldom, and be restricted to a very few 'survival' situations. I was also working with constraints due to lack of time, credit availability, and academic motivation. Syllabus planning time was minimal, and since the course was worth half a credit there were only thirty contact hours available. Student motivation was hindered both by lack of time and the low priority status of the Italian course in their academic requirements. It was impossible to remove these restrictions without restructuring the architecture curriculum. Constraints, therefore, were simply variables to be

taken into account for a future redesigning of the course were it to be repeated.

The course proceeded in short-term stages, during which I tried to determine hypothetical short-term needs. The syllabus kept changing almost weekly, as I attempted to accommodate both my perceptions of predictable needs, and the vague definitions that kept emerging from the students. Interestingly enough, the needs surfacing from the students' response were of a cultural and social nature. They wanted to know about the Italians' behaviour, way of life, attitudes and habits, rather than the actual process of language acquisition.

In the *Report* the students wrote after they came back from Italy, they showed they had benefitted from a course so hastily put together:

Everyone found the course (Italian) most beneficial especially during those first moments in Rome at the train station when lost and overwhelmed. The limited vocabulary gained set up an opportunity for learning in the immersion situation in Rome.

However, the *Report* confirmed that the students were linguistically naive:

The study of the vocabulary was excellent although many found that the lack of knowledge of verbs prevented the students [us] from carrying on a relaxed conversation. In other words, if the concentration could be on full phrases, it would benefit all.

Many of the students' observations, though, helped me to design short-term and long-term objectives.

In my own assessment of the DSA 82, the unique potential of such a group of students was quite evident. A class profile had clearly emerged. The architecture students formed a homogeneous and cohesive group. Communal life and work in a very human space—such as the School of Architecture—linked them together with an *esprit du corps* and loyalty that is not often to be found in Arts students. A common discipline, and common professional goals, inevitably create similar needs. I observed commonalities in all the students

of my first group (and in students of subsequent DSA programs). Architecture students have a lively imagination, a flair for creativity, combined with precision, and the need for orderly, and clearly defined structures. Most students rely heavily on drawing as a form of communication. My first group of students used drawings and visual props to bridge the communication gaps in classroom skits.

The emerging class profile also included negative characteristics. Most students seemed to have poor aptitude for languages, including their own. While presenting their architecture projects to a board of Carleton architecture professors and guest critics (CRITS), the students stumbled on words, were barely audible, and hardly intelligible; they were never aggressive in introducing, illustrating, or defending their works. They did not seem to attribute any importance to the oral presentation, as if they felt that their own (and only) way of expressing thoughts, concepts, interpretations, was displayed in their graphic renditions, and their tridimensional models.

We know that aptitudinal and attitudinal factors play an important role in the process of language acquisition. However it is seldom possible to predict a taxonomy of such factors in a particular group of learners, so that strategies can be devised to lower the level of "affective filter," and ease the process of acquisition. In this case, after my first set of discoveries with the DSA 82 students, I was able to predict a rather homogeneous and stable attitudinal and aptitudinal profile for the students in subsequent DSA courses.

Phase Two: DSA 83

My experience with DSA 82 had given me some insight into the characteristics of architecture students. But my observations had not pinpointed either the Architecture School's or the students' perception of course needs. The result was a particularly predictable profile of the DSA class, and an unpredictable, wide range of hypothetical needs. Therefore I decided that the definition of needs for the course would have

the lowest priority in my syllabus design. Furthermore, the syllabus for the DSA 83 would not be restricted to the confining situation-oriented approach. Rather, I would take into account the students' discipline-related attitudes and aptitudes, and experiment with a heuristic approach. The main objective of the course, consequently, was to maximize the potential of the students' knowledge in their own field, i. e. to maximize "comprehensible input" related to architecture. The DSA 83 module was planned as a propaedeutic stage in which the students would be exposed to the language by means of familiar subject matter. Italian was to be the vehicle rather than an object of study. The intention was to lead the students towards an understanding of how to acquire language, rather than towards the actual acquisition of Italian. Students were encouraged to discern and to develop their individual learning strategies, and then to apply their discoveries to the second stage of the process: language acquisition outside the classroom when they arrived in Italy. Gradually students would learn to perceive their individual needs, and to develop appropriate strategies.

The short-term objectives for the course then were to provide the students with subject matter input in Italian. I decided that the first five units would concentrate on input that was relevant and easily understandable. I started with geometric and solid forms, with the "language of arithmetic," and with the "language of drawing." Initially students were encouraged to respond to questions only by drawing. In this way, comprehension was checked without insistence on early production, and students were allowed an initial 'silent period.' For the first five units I selected input that I thought would be conceptually familiar and congenial, as well as comprehensible and interesting. The material ranged from the most elementary juxtaposition of architectural elements, to the more complex compositions embodied in architectural objects. The input gradually became less familiar and more

interesting, when I introduced descriptions of Italian architecture that the students had not previously studied. All throughout the five units I felt it important the language I used be at a normal rate, and not artificial. The input was not grammatically sequenced, nor was it consciously syntactically simplified.

Tests were considered an integral component of the acquisition process: I gave classroom tests in order to help students refine their strategies, and to challenge their processes of intuition. The intent was to stimulate the students rather than to test them on material they had previously "learnt."

By using subject matter as comprehensible input I had hoped to overcome the resistance the first group had shown to guessing from context. I had anticipated that professional words and concepts would produce the "right echoes" and lower the level of affective filter in the students' process of language acquisition. I had also thought that by relying initially on their own knowledge, students would feel more comfortable, and would then be encouraged to listen more attentively for other echoes in other situations, other expressions, and other topics. My approach was therefore loosely based on Krashen's 'comprehensibility' of input. However, whereas Krashen would presumably advocate teaching students a familiar content at a language level just above their limited competence, I worked with new content just above the level of the students' 'competence' in architecture.

On the basis of my observations of the DSA 82 group, I had defined common attitudes and aptitudes and as a result I had predicted a homogeneous and cohesive class profile for future classes. The DSA 83 confirmed my hunch of predictable class homogeneity, but not of cohesiveness. The students in my second group were held apart by personal incompatibility, competitiveness, and frequent disagreements. Consequently the receptiveness of the group in general was influenced by these factors. The DSA 83 group rarely re-

sponded with enthusiasm, and often complained about the amount of required work. The tension among the students was almost palpable, and was certainly not conducive to acquiring a language. As a result of this experience I realized that the relaxed yet lively atmosphere created by the DSA 82 class was a variable.

Relying once again on my experience with the DSA 82, I had expected all architecture students to be comfortable drawing free hand. Yet for this group, drawing posed a threat. I persevered, however, with the constant use of architecture input which I still intuitively perceived to be the best initial approach. In addition, I discovered that the DSA 83 students had been frequently exposed to experiments in the School of Architecture. Had I been forewarned, I would not have told them that the content for the Italian course was experimental as well. What I had thought would be a further strategy to get them fully involved in an exciting experimental project was unfortunately a cause of increased class antagonism and discontent. In spite of the class mood and lack of cohesiveness, the results of my experimental architecture input were very encouraging. The students were responding to the various strategies as effectively as I had anticipated. Paradoxically, the students were unconsciously beginning to take Italian for granted. They were not aware of their own progress, nor did they appreciate the intricacy of the language they were by then able to understand, respond to, interact with. Language was the vehicle, not the object of study: the students were interested in the message that the subject matter, in Italian, conveyed.

Though my rapport with the DSA 83 group was less easy-going than the rapport I had enjoyed with the former DSA 82 students, by the middle of the term I had got to know the individual DSA 83 students quite closely. I had asked them, in fact, to write a logbook in which I hoped they would record their reactions and their strategies. What I received, instead,

was a weekly summary of what we had done in class, with no further comments. Then, unexpectedly, I found myself listening to their diaries. Completely out of synchrony with my expectations, they spoke of the students' personal problems. The diaries, no longer logbooks, revealed other characteristics of the architecture students. New facets were added to my former predictable class profile; they enriched my insight into the students who seldom admit their worries and fears, and who, even more rarely, express them in writing.

The initial five units of the module were to be followed either by five more units of architecture input, or by five 'survival' units, determined by my identification of hypothetical needs. Before deciding which set of units to use, I assessed the students' reactions, asked them for any perceptions of their own needs they might have formed. They opted, quite predictably, for the five 'survival' units. Instead of dwelling on my observations on the last part of the course, which was heavily constrained by their impending final architecture projects (CRITS), I would rather turn now directly to my observations of the students during their last week in Rome. The objective of my trip was to observe the students' ability to survive in an Italian-speaking environment. I was determined to watch them in loco, since my previous efforts to assess DSA 82 students upon their return to Canada had been unsuccessful. In Rome, I closely followed the students for approximately four days. I talked to them in groups and individually; I watched them perform all the predictable tasks and roles of everyday life. They ordered meals, bargained in shops, made long distance calls, booked restaurant tables, and made small talk with shopkeepers, waiters and clerks at the post office and bank. By then, the students had been in Rome for approximately three months. They could be suave, humorous, pleading, mildly aggressive, facetious, and even flirtatious, all in broken Italian. On many occasions they

would use body language, and conveyed part of their message by simply imitating the Italians' wordless, eye-contact communications. Most of the students knew a lot of details about the life of the couple who owned the pensione where they were staying. They knew about the couple's problems, their way of life, and the various relatives and their problems. The students had to use Italian since the woman spoke no English, and the man could use a few 'tourist English' expressions.

In Rome, the students did not have to ask for directions, for they knew Rome better than the Romans. They knew where the cheap and expensive shops were, where to find the cheap/bad and the cheap/good restaurants. Their knowledge was a result of their ability to communicate in Italian. The students watched a good deal of television and skimmed the newspaper headlines, looking for news of Canada that was invariably not there. They sat in cafés for long hours. They had absorbed the Italian way of life: it suited them as well as the Italian clothes they were wearing. They refused to be taken for tourists; they wanted to fade into the Italian crowd. The transformation was indeed subtler than their outward appearance. The students strutted along the downtown streets of Rome as if they belonged there; they did not shun the inevitable body contact in crowded piazzas or enclosed spaces. A more self-confident deportment and behaviour reflected other changes in their personality. It seemed that communal life in Rome and the process of acculturation had made them a group, and improved their relationship with one another. Although the exact aetiology of the new group cohesiveness is hard to pinpoint, it was only in Rome that I was able to include that variable to the class profile of DSA 83.

Each of the students in the group had an interview with me before I left Rome. Using Italian, each student described his/her final project of the DSA program. Later I saw an

exhibition of these projects at the Canadian Mediterranean Institute, and was able to confirm that their descriptions had been accurate. They had conveyed to me their concepts, their intuitions, and finally their interpretations of the texture of the city, as well as having proven that they were able to communicate with the people of the city, in predictable and unpredictable situations.

As a going-away present, I was given a book written by one of my favourite Italian architects, and a poster of the Rome exhibition. Both were inscribed with the students' signatures and messages in Italian. One read: "*Claudia voi siete come un raggio di sole in la nostra vita.*" In spite of the mistakes, the message conveyed the spirit and the flowery style of the true Italian, and the sense of humour of the student in question.

Phase Three: DSA 84

The School of Architecture asked for the Italian course in good time for the current academic year. However, there was a last-minute surprise at the beginning of the winter term. Changes in planning for the DSA 84 program and a different process of student selection had doubled the numbers. Fortunately, the surprise provided me with the opportunity to investigate my idea of subject matter teaching further, and to test my course more thoroughly.

The group of approximately forty students was divided into two sections. One section (Survival) was to be taught with the same approach, methodologies, strategies, and textbook as a regular Arts course in oral Italian which focuses on survival skills. The other section (Architecture) was to be taught along the same lines as the DSA 83 course of "subject matter as input for beginners," except that architecture units would be extended throughout the whole course. At the time of splitting the class into two groups, the different designs of the two syllabuses were explained, and students were

allowed to choose which section to join. Though I hoped that the two groups would balance in numbers, I did not want to force the students arbitrarily into the one or the other section. Some students asked to attend both sets of lectures before making up their minds; some students asked, a week later, to switch groups, and were allowed to do so. A few students consulted former DSA colleagues before choosing a section; some relied on their own perceptions of the different approaches presented to them; others may have just played Italian roulette. Although this year's DSA students seem to be as linguistically naive as the previous groups, I believe that they considered the option quite seriously, and discussed the issue at length. The selection process forced them to define their own needs and objectives, however vaguely, before the course actually began.

So far, the DSA 84 students seem to match the predictable profile I had anticipated. The two sections are cohesive and homogeneous. Unlike the DSA 83, the students are not competitive, and there is no discontent about the student selection process for the DSA program. Nothing hinders the rapport among the group members. In both sections the class atmosphere is friendly and easy-going.

The two different sets of teaching strategies that I am using in the two sections, however, elicit different student responses. The Survival group is usually very intense, and very tense throughout the entire class period. The students have not yet relaxed, and do not seem to trust themselves to my methods and my approach. The Architecture section is less tense and less intense. The level of concentration in the Survival section is sometimes painful to watch. Conversely, the level of concentration in the Architecture section is at times sufficiently blasé to wound my teaching ego.

A new factor seems to be surfacing in my use of subject matter as input for beginners; at least it is a factor I had not noticed while I was trying the course on the DSA 83 students.

From the very beginning of the DSA 84, the students have appeared quite reluctant to accept the architecture input, and have shown an apparent lack of concentration. At first I thought it was because they were working on very simple interrelationships of architectural elements, and using very simple arithmetic language. Slowly, I began to realize that when I asked the students to perform, and respond to content that was obviously very comprehensible, they would start to quibble, and react as if the most elementary questions were unexplainable and absurd. In trying to account for this factor my hunch is that the architecture students are unconsciously rejecting my intrusion into "their world." I have entered their inner sanctum, and I have dared to infer that an uninitiated outsider can use the language of architecture.

It is too early to compare and contrast the attitudes and behaviour of the two sections of the DSA 84 group. Whatever professional conclusions I may reach at the end of my investigation, I should note one change now. The tension and unnatural concentration in the Survival section are still hard to ease, whereas the students in the Architecture section are occasionally producing lively sparks of interested response, momentarily dispelling their lack of intensity and concentration. It is a note full of expectations. But that is another story; it will be the inevitable follow-up of this working paper.

Editorial note:

At the time this paper was written the DSA 84 course was still in progress.

Acknowledgements

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Needs Assessment Surveys

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Introduction

The following report discusses one approach to needs assessment surveys. This approach was adopted in a survey which was recently conducted in the ESL unit of the Centre for Applied Language Studies, Carleton University. Two advanced ESL groups carried out an assignment (see Appendix) to determine the types of language activities they would participate in in their courses at Carleton University. Students were required to determine types of tests and exams given in these courses. The various categories of tests and activities were broken down into smaller subcategories to help students identify, with some specificity, assignments and requirements of each course. For example, the writing category listed some of the following: essays, lab reports, problem solving, experiments, programming, etc. Evaluation included categories such as essay form, short answer, multiple choice, etc. A more complete description of the assignment is included in the Appendix.

The assignment led to musings on this type of survey as well as on needs surveys in general. A discussion of these issues follows the results of the survey. They are included because the area is one which requires continued reappraisal and

input. My informal comments are designed to contribute to discussions on needs surveys. They are also intended to raise questions about types of surveys and the role they might, can, or should play in course design in a variety of language learning situations.

Purposes of the Assignment

There were two specific purposes of the survey. The first was to get a clearer description of actual types of assignments and tests in a variety of courses at the undergraduate and graduate levels in a wide range of disciplines, for course planning purposes. Although the composition of the student body in the ESL courses changes from term to term, that is, disciplines represented are not the same from year to year (see below under problems), I felt it would be helpful in course planning to try to determine what a given group of students identified as their requirements. Course design has frequently been on an ad hoc basis formed by one of three criteria:

- 1) Intuitive identification of problem areas that had either been described in the literature of applied linguistics or gathered over years of teaching;
- 2) Selection of themes that would be of interest to a wide range of students;
- 3) Availability of published or teacher prepared materials.

The second purpose of the survey was to heighten students' awareness of their own needs. Too often, students are unaware of the types of skills they require; as a result, they either cannot see the relevance of the language course material, or they do not know the actual skills they require, or are unable to identify their own problem areas. We are all familiar with the types of student replies we obtain when we ask students to identify their own needs. Too often, vague replies such as more vocabulary, grammar, spelling, come back in questionnaires. The idea of the survey was to help students

determine requirements of courses, so that they would become more knowledgeable about their needs, clearer about the purpose of assignments in the language course, and understanding of the necessity to work on problem areas on their own as well as in the class.

Results of Survey

Because of the wide range of needs that surface in individual cases, I will concentrate only on those that were described in 3-5 cases. These results are based on twenty-one needs surveys from students in advanced ESL courses./par

Needs Assessment Survey Results

<i>Reading: Types</i>	
Textbooks	81%
Blackboard	62%
Overhead transparencies	33%
Course notes	14%
Charts/graphs	14%
<i>Writing: Types</i>	
Essays/term papers	43%
Computer programming & problem solving	43%
Short answer	14%
Lab reports and experiments	19%
<i>Speaking: Types</i>	
Consultation with T.A.	19%
Group discussion	19%
Oral presentation	14%
<i>Listening: Types</i>	
Notetaking	66%
Lecture	38%
Taped lectures/films	14%
<i>Tests: Types</i>	
Essay - long and short	57%
Computer programming or problem solving	57%
Multiple choice	62%
Short answer	33%

Needs Surveys: Problems and Comments

I include the following comments on the problems related to the survey so that others interested in conducting a similar one will be aware of some of the pitfalls as well as some of the factors which make this type of survey necessarily incomplete.

First, I mentioned above that the composition of the course changes from year to year. In the seven years of teaching in the ESL program at Carleton, we have seen a decided shift of areas of study from engineering and technology to business, commerce and social science. Five, four, and even three years ago, most of the students who filled our ESL courses were hoping to get into, or were already enrolled in, the Faculty of Engineering. While there are still some students in this area of study, the majority are now interested in Commerce, Business, or Economics. Interestingly, this change has been accompanied by, or perhaps caused by, a radical change in ethnic make-up of our classes. Up until about 1 or 2 years ago, our classes were composed primarily of South American students with a smattering from other areas. This year, our advanced classes are about 90% Oriental; the other 10% is French Canadian, Spanish, Turkish, and Portuguese. The change also brings with it different language problems. The obvious implication is that the language course material has to be adapted with some frequency to meet changing student interests and needs. Therefore, a needs survey in any one term yields descriptions that may no longer be applicable a year or even a term later.

Second, our ESL classes are heterogenous in a variety of ways. Students who come to us may be any one of the following: special, part-time undergraduate, full-time undergraduate, or graduate students. A needs survey based on responses from a varied group such as this will necessarily look like a hodge-podge of information from which it is difficult to isolate core problem areas for a significant segment of the class. For example, while an undergraduate may need to develop

notetaking or library skills, a graduate student may not need either, but may instead require specific writing and research skills in order to complete a thesis. Heterogeneity of a different sort compounds this problem. We have always had a wide range of disciplines represented in our classes—from Geology to Zoology. A needs survey of students in these varied subject areas yields such disparate needs and interests that the teacher is at best confused; at worst s/he may be discouraged in the attempt to design a course that answers student needs. The obvious question is whose needs? We have all been planning courses on the assumption that there are a set of basic core needs that fit under the heading EAP. Is this assumption really true? What are these needs? Is there, in fact, a common core?

The third problem that surfaced as a result of the survey is one that includes two related areas. First, as might be expected, the thoroughness with which the students carried out the survey varied tremendously. Reports on the survey ranged from half a page of vague comments to five typewritten, highly detailed pages with much irrelevant information. This problem is partly a result of the assignment instructions which did not specify length; it also, however, reflects both the students' own ability/inability to understand the importance of thoroughness and to be committed enough to the course to carry out a difficult assignment handed out in the first week.

A second closely related problem concerns the late entry of many of the students. Due to late registration at Carleton, students frequently do not show up in class until the second or third week of classes. The purpose of the survey is obviously to ensure that the course answers identified needs; however, if the reports are to indicate the direction of the course, in some areas at least, they can only do so if they are completed early enough. It is rather difficult to teach a course for three to four weeks and then to change in mid-stream. The number

of reports handed in during the first two weeks of courses was quite small—it grew until most reports were in by the middle of the fourth week. Some late registrants didn't finally hand in the report until the end of week four. The processing of the reports then took two weeks, by which time half the term was over.

Given this timing problem, needs surveys of this sort would be useful if several were conducted over a full academic year, findings collated, and then used to form the basis of future courses. We need a battery of needs survey results. This would permit a teacher to select the appropriate profiles of her students' needs as soon as the courses meet. In other words, if there were a series of surveys that identified types of needs of a variety of disciplines at graduate and undergraduate levels and of different ethnic groups, then at the beginning of the course the teacher could conduct an informal survey of his/her class to match the needs with students. Teachers could then plan courses according to a set of pre-identified needs. This, of course, assumes a flexibility on the part of the teachers, who could not map out a course until students had actually been met. However, if a battery of needs surveys and appropriate matching teaching materials were available, then teachers could instantly access and process these materials.

One final note about needs surveys: this type of survey is only one among many that are needed to begin to determine language course content. Three other types immediately come to mind. The first is a survey of professors in a variety of disciplines to discover their requirements and their impression of foreign student problem areas. The second is a survey of both native and second language student 'A', 'B', 'C', and 'D' papers, reports, assignments, to determine what constitutes good, acceptable, and bad work. To date, we as ESL teachers have only a very sketchy idea of the standards in a variety of fields; as a result, we may be expecting too

much of our students—a comment several of us frequently have made. We may also be emphasizing the wrong things. The third type is a survey of actual materials (both written and spoken) that students use in a variety of disciplines. This would involve two kinds of research: one—an examination of discourse studies already completed and, two, an analysis of discourse characteristics in the disciplines under consideration that have not yet been analyzed and reported on.

Conclusion

The results suggest that there are in fact core skills that are needed by most students. However, the results do not indicate all the needs identified, nor can they alone guide us in planning courses. It is obvious that we need to conduct a variety of types of needs surveys; to continue to plan courses and design materials in a vacuum is, I think, time-consuming, and of questionable value.

Acknowledgement

I would like to thank Robert Ahad, a student in the Certificate for Teaching English as a Second Language Program at Carleton University, who plowed through all of the reports, extracted relevant information, and devised a chart which outlined the types of language skills required in courses.

APPENDIX

Needs Assessment Survey

Needs Assessment Survey *

Since 21.190 is designed to prepare you for academic study in English, the focus will be on those skills you will need in specific programs of study. Because each group of students have different needs, you are asked in this activity to help identify requirements in your other courses at Carleton. This will ensure that the many aspects of the ESL course are most closely suited to your needs.

There are several types of skills that all students need; however, some skills may be needed more by one group than by another. For example, in many science courses, lab reports are required while in social science courses they may not be.

The thoroughness with which you carry out this assignment will determine the degree to which this course answers your needs.

Assignment

The survey you will carry out will be written up in a report. This will be presented to the class, to your ESL instructor and may be used as the basis for future ESL Courses. It should therefore be as complete as possible. Since several of you may be in the same fields of study and at the same level (undergraduate or graduate) you may work together on this report.

I Format

Your report should contain information - in complete sentences - on each of the following categories:

- * 1) Tests/Exams
- * 2) Course Requirements/Syllabus
- * 3) Course assignments

* See below for more information on each of these topics.

II Due Dates

- a) January 6 - all information collected
- discuss presentation of information with group
and with ESL instructor
- b) January 9 - report to be presented to class and to ESL instructor.

III Procedures

- 1) Obtain a course syllabus for the courses you are currently taking or that you hope to take in the Spring, Summer or Fall terms.

III Procedures (cont'd)

- a) determine from these syllabuses what the homework assignments are and what each requires. Try to determine whether they involve mainly reading, writing or problem solving etc.
- b) determine how much you are expected to read each week. Also find out if this reading is mainly of textbooks, lab reports, journals or a combination of all.
- c) determine the types of writing you will have to do. If this is not clearly explained in the syllabus, discuss it with your professor or teaching assistant. Also try to find out which you will do most frequently. Some of the types are:
 - 1) Summaries and abstracts of books and journal articles
 - 2) Research papers
 - 3) Lab/Experimental reports
 - 4) Proposals
 - 5) Annotated bibliographies
 - 6) Problem solving projects or reports
 - 7) Answers to essay questions on tests
 - 8) Other - please specify
- 2) Go to the library or department office and look at three tests in your field of study. Record the following information:
 - 1) Course title and number
 - 2) Type of test questions on the test paper
 - 3) Are the questions based primarily on the textbook, other assigned reading or lectures or a combination of all of these.
- 3) Write up a short description of the lectures in your course; include answers to some of the following:
 - a) Is the lecture based on material from the textbook?
 - b) Does the lecture cover areas not discussed in the textbook?
 - c) Does the lecturer use blackboard, overhead transparencies, slides in his/her lectures?
 - d) Is the important information put on the board?
 - e) Are you expected to take many or few notes during the lecture?

You will probably want to discuss these questions with other students in your course and with your professor.

Report

Record all of the information that you obtain. You might also record your reactions to your findings. Were you surprised at how much you have to read? etc.

Remember that the information you collect will be useful in two ways. First, it will give you a clear idea of course requirements. Second, this information will be extremely helpful to your ESL instructor in planning the ESL course so that it is most useful to you.

* This is adapted from a needs survey instrument developed by Kathryn Herviz Hauges, University of Minnesota, : 'Needs Assessments: Teaching Students to Do Their Own' which was distributed at the 17th annual TESOL conference, March, 1983.

Compiling Instructors' Perceptions of Learners' Deficiencies:

*A Problem-centered Approach to
In-service Training and Language Program Development*

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An increasingly significant body of material is being written in three areas of Language Education which have not hitherto (or to any great degree) been directly associated. First, an accumulating momentum has been generated behind the movement for communicative syllabuses in language programs to be negotiated between instructors and applied linguists who take into account their students' specific learning and communication needs (Brumfit 1983, Johnson 1982, Yalden 1983). There are also appeals by teacher trainers who advocate continuing in-service development for teachers of languages as a means of ensuring that teachers master their professional capacities in the classroom management of learning (Bosquet and Mackay 1979, Brumfit and Rossner 1982, King 1983, Mohan 1982). Yet another set of writings recognizes the need for practicing teachers and administrators to resolve collectively the problems they perceive to exist within their teaching environments (Calve 1983, Early and Bolitho

1981, Johns 1981, Munsell 1982). Considered together these issues represent various aspects of a concern for what Brumfit (1982) calls the 'humanistic' elements which may contribute to the effectiveness of a successful language program.¹ Surprisingly little has been said, however, about specific procedures which administrators of language programs can implement to actively promote these elements as goals of development for language programs.

Situation

This paper documents an approach to program administration which attempted to integrate the three factors of, 1) communicative syllabus specification, 2) in-service professional development of teaching staff, and 3) collective decision-making on the techniques for implementing instruction with particular student groups. The approach was devised for a program of non-credit intensive courses in academic English at Carleton University in 1983, where a number of (undoubtedly common) complexities inherent in the program called for a more efficacious system of staff and program development than is normally afforded by the conventional formats of weekly discussions, informal contacts, or demonstrations of teaching techniques. A sudden increase in the population of students from contract groups created circumstances wherein several relatively inexperienced teachers were hired to work alongside a core of more experienced teachers. The learner groups consisted of extremely heterogeneous types and ages of individuals with varied cultural backgrounds as well as various purposes for studying the language. In addition, time had not permitted the full specification of an appropriate syl-

¹ Brumfit (1982) cites language programs: "where staff-student contact takes place over a long period so that participants have time to build up a genuine relationship", "where teachers perform their tasks efficiently but with a constant regard for the feelings and variable needs of students", "where staff are confident of the abilities of students to succeed", "where the students are confident that the staff understand exactly what they are doing", and "where the staff visibly respect each other and work together as a team".

labus for study. An expedient procedure for program development was required in order to cohere staff into a working team that agreed on the manner and content of instruction, to allow newly hired teachers to profit from the experiences and perceptions of the core staff (while also encouraging the formers' individual development into competent instructors), and to provide a teaching environment which recognized particular students' needs for language learning.

Procedure

The procedure implemented involved each teacher identifying 'problems' which they considered the students demonstrated in their learning behaviour during classes (see Appendix A). Descriptions of these deficiencies were circulated every second week for other staff to comment on and to suggest 'remedial' teaching strategies for (see Appendix B). This material then formed the basis for more extensive discussion of learners' needs, appropriate teaching techniques, and sharing of research reports or reference materials at bi-weekly staff meetings structured as problem-solving sessions. Minutes of these discussions were taken, distributed to staff, and reviewed at following meetings. After a six-month period of implementing this technique, an informal consensus regarding teachers' perceptions of many of the so-called deficiencies demonstrated by the learners had been reached and a wide variety of relevant teaching techniques or behaviours for classroom interaction had been implemented. Attempts were then made to analyze the significance of the evolving documentation.

Correlation with Another Program

The accumulated number of thirty odd 'problems' were compiled into a list of seventeen items (see Appendix C) which represented the set of items contributed by various staff members during their discussions about learners' specific deficiencies; many overlapping or common items were

Figure 1

Rank ordering of items by arithmetic mean.

Items are identified by letters corresponding to the sequence of items shown in Appendix C.

Carleton Ranking	U.B.C. Ranking	Mean Ranking
N=10	N=7	
1. p (3.8)	g (4)	d (4.2)
2. p (4)	d (4.4)	g (4.2)
3. g (4.4)	p (4.8)	p (4.3)
4. h (4.8)	i (5)	h (6.6)
5. c (6.2)	a (6.4)	a (6.7)
6. a (7)	c (7.2)	c (6.7)
7. o (7)	h (8.4)	o (7.9)
8. l (8)	j (8.6)	i (8.1)
9. e (9.6)	f (8.8)	f (9.2)
10. f (9.6)	o (8.8)	b (9.5)
11. b (9.8)	b (9.2)	e (9.9)
12. i (11.2)	e (10.2)	l (9.9)
13. j (11.6)	l (11.8)	j (10.1)
14. m (12.6)	q (12)	q (12.8)
15. q (13.6)	n (13.4)	m (13.8)
16. k (13.8)	k (14.4)	n (14.1)
17. n (14.8)	m (15)	k (14.1)

compressed into one and some extraneous items were eliminated. Instructors in the program at Carleton were asked

to rank order the items in terms of their perceived importance. To establish external verification of the pertinence of the rankings, instructors in a similar but longer established ESL program at the University of British Columbia also rank-ordered the same items. A cross-comparison of the means showed a high level of correlation (.8 using the Spearman Rank Order Formula) to exist between the ratings by the two bodies of teaching staff, including a certain degree of consensus on the instructors' perceptions of the relative importance of the items identified. Analysis of the rankings showed both groups of teachers to be most concerned about learners' deficiencies which related broadly to the concept of 'language learning strategies'²:

- students lack self confidence
- students have difficulty applying known information
- students have problems learning new language items from context.

Other items were categorized more specifically into groups relating to the probable causes of learners' perceived problems— inadequate strategies for coping with classroom instruction (items a, e, f, j, k, q, in Appendix C), inadequate comprehension strategies (items h, l, o), a general lack of skill in English or university study (items b, c, m), or problems caused by the administration of the language program (items i, n)— however no consensus over the priorities attributed to these latter categories emerged from the data.

Relation to Syllabus

While no steps have been taken to relate these percep-

² The three items ranked highest correspond loosely to three of Stern's (1975) "ten features that mark out good language learning": "a tolerant and outgoing approach to the target language and empathy with its speakers", "an active approach to the learning task", and "strategies of experimentation and planning with the object of developing the new language into an ordered system".

tions formally to the design of courses, this act could represent a further stage in the process of program development. As preliminary gestures in this direction, several instructors have produced possible outlines for course components of the intensive program. Many of the less experienced instructors showed a marked shift (over the eight month period described) toward preferences for course types with a content and interactional emphasis rather than an emphasis on language items or the 'four skills' (i.e. reading, writing, listening, speaking) which had previously made up the program design. Concluding that the procedures for 'problem-solving' were responsible for these shifts in orientations in teaching would be presumptuous, especially when concerns for students' self-confidence, abilities to apply known information, and facilities for learning language from specific contexts are all representative of developments that have taken place throughout the methodology of language teaching in general. Nevertheless, it can be said that the 'problem-solving' procedures did focus the attention of teachers firmly on the task of perceiving and analyzing the learning needs of their students, with the implicit assumption that such perceptions relate directly to their decisions about approaches to, or strategies for, language instruction.

In-service Training

The approach to in-service training described here assumes that such training is instituted in order to develop a language program as well as to match its design to the learning needs of its students and participants. Unlike the conception that in-service training should cater to the aspirations of developing teachers who wish to obtain a recognized form of certification (cf. Lange 1983), this approach assumes the process of teacher development can be subsumed within the greater priority of administering an effective system of language education for language learners. But rather than say-

ing that in-service training needs are necessarily secondary, we ought to look for ways which promote the professional development of teaching staff concurrently with the development of a consensus by all staff members on how language teaching can be most successfully implemented with specific learner groups.

Professional Development

To describe where or how in-service training took place in the program documented here is much the same thing as describing how decisions were made regarding the design of the program itself. At staff meetings teachers contributed their perceptions of problems which they had observed learners experience during their classes. Inevitably, less qualified instructors contributed 'problem' items of a less significant order ('students cannot follow instructions for exercises' or 'students resist accepting the conventions of formal English') than those of their more experienced colleagues. The latter's resources of techniques for coping with such difficulties of classroom management were drawn upon to provide a wealth of advice for those teachers who were especially in need of in-service training. Moreover, after several weeks of serious discussion of this type, so-called trainees were able to note the type of 'problems' which the more experienced teachers concerned themselves with. As a consequence, the order of their perceptions about learners' deficiencies increased considerably so that virtually all staff were not only openly identifying major issues ('students lack self-confidence' or 'students have problems learning new language items from context') which appeared to hinder the progress of learner groups but also were supplying practical recommendations about teaching strategies which might counter these difficulties. This 'group dynamic' then quite naturally led itself toward sensible definitions of the types of study which would be suited for the learners in the language program.

A Similar Approach

Directed in this manner, the effect of identifying problems in a language program took on quite a different character from that reported by Early and Bolitho (1982) who addressed an in-service training session of secondary school teachers in Bremen with a similar problem-solving technique but found that the teachers were more preoccupied with "objective constraints implicit in the school situation": "a. wide ability range in classes, b. teacher effort being out of proportion to student response, c. lack of time to 'cover' the syllabus, d. material conditions in classrooms, e. class size (classes of thirty-plus pupils), and f. inadequate textbooks and materials." A major difference between the two approaches, however, resides in Early and Bolitho's undertaking of their project as a five-day course offered by consultants from outside of the program itself. This appears to have resulted in their receiving an inevitable expression of frustration about working conditions (over which staff had little control), whereas the procedures employed at Carleton were staged as an on-going process of discussion amongst program staff who were able to utilize the technique both as a vehicle for contributing their perceptions and solutions to one another regularly and as a means for sensing that their contributions were being incorporated into the 'organic' development of the program's design.

Discussion

Contrasting these two efforts at implementing problem-solving techniques with language teaching staff again exposes the importance of so-called 'humanistic' concerns in language program development (cf. Brumfit 1982, cited earlier). While the act of teaching is in itself perhaps the best form of in-service training available, there remains a need for developing teachers to engage themselves purposefully in the decision-making processes which lead to the establish-

ment of a language program that satisfies the expectations of learners and teachers alike. By sharing perceptions about students' deficiencies in learning behaviour, ideas on appropriate teaching strategies, and articles on research or materials design, developing teachers can learn to recognize the issues with which they should properly concern themselves when performing their duties, to accomodate their beliefs or attitudes to suit a group consensus within a relatively short period of time, and to apply themselves toward the vital task of developing a language program which meets their learners' goals.

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APPENDIX A

*A Sample of the Form Distributed to Elicit
Teachers' Identification of Learners' Deficiencies*

Originator:

Contributors:

Students in class _____ appear to have problems _____

This is most evident when:

1.

2.

3.

Suggested teaching strategies or procedures are:

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

6.

7.

8.

9.

10.

APPENDIX B

*Sample of a Completed Form Distributed
amongst Teaching Staff at Carleton University*

originator: Alister

contributors: Renata, Lonny, Roger, Razika, Anne

Students in class D appear to have problems formulating answers to comprehension questions in their own words and without copying inappropriate material from the source document they are working on.

This is most evident when:

1. students are writing answers to questions from taped material
2. questions ask students to interpret rather than directly quote material
3. students do not appear to have considered the logical implications of what they have written

Suggested teaching strategies or procedures are:

1. Write down students' answers as a list. Have the class analyze them to see if they offer appropriate formulations. This often has good results with less complex exercises.
2. Try showing examples of different responses to the same material. Grade them according to level of appropriacy, from simple restatement to more interpretive views.
3. Have students analyze a series of possible answers to questions about a passage - from verbatim statements to interpretations with totally different rephrasings. Discuss the potentially different meanings in each answer.

4. Ask students to compare their responses and reach a consensus on which answers provide the most appropriate responses. Ask them to explain why some answers may include inappropriate material.
5. Encourage students to formulate their own questions about passages so that their level of questioning matches their level of comprehension.

APPENDIX C
Items Ranked by Teachers

- a. students become confused by unknown vocabulary items
- b. students confuse registers of English
- c. students have difficulties identifying the forms (speech parts) of words
- d. students lack self-confidence
- e. students do not make full use of homework assignments
- f. students do not pay attention to instructions given by teachers
- g. students have difficulties applying known information
- h. students are distracted by particular features of texts and thus fail to grasp the overall meanings of passages
- i. differences in proficiency levels within classes cause more proficient students to become bored and less proficient students to become confused
- j. students often fail to perform to their full potential in group activities
- k. students tend to plagiarize from source documents
- l. students tend to interpret English literally and not derive inferred or suggested meanings from spoken or written texts
- m. students often lack adequate library research skills
- n. students feel disoriented if they are relocated in different classes after a change of terms
- o. students have difficulties recognizing the referents of words (especially pronouns)
- p. students have problems learning new language items from context
- q. students resist accepting the conventions of formal English

The Carleton University Writing Tutorial Service

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For almost ten years now, Carleton University has been mounting a somewhat unusual, and certainly untraditional program in the teaching of writing. The Writing Tutorial Service is what its name implies—a service to students where those who want help with their writing, usually the writing of academic essays, can come for individual tutoring. The tutors are graduate students trained for this task, working for the Service as part of their university scholarship. The Service is offered free of charge to all students, graduate and undergraduate, part-time and full-time, those majoring in English as well as in other disciplines.

The procedure is quite simple: any student who wants help can make a one-hour appointment with the tutor merely by calling the secretary or visiting our office any day of the week. When they make their first appointment, students are asked to leave a sample of their writing for the tutor to consider before they meet. The first meeting is devoted to discussing the student's problems and mapping a joint strategy; the student and tutor continue to meet for these

one-hour sessions until either one or the other no longer finds the tutorials necessary.

This bare-bones description of the operation and organization of the Writing Tutorial Service, of course, tells little of how we actually teach. Before discussing our teaching methods and philosophy, however, I would like to say something about the history of the Service and the context in which it arose—not out of historical interest but because what is central to our approach and to our evolution is that we have responded to real needs within a specific context. The Writing Tutorial Service was not imposed on Carleton as an alien structure from without; rather, it grew from within, responding to internal promptings and assuming a shape that was compatible with the larger organism.

History

The Writing Tutorial Service began in the English Department with two graduate students enlisted to help those upper-year students, honouring or majoring in English, who were not satisfied with their writing. Upper-year English students have, of course, already self-selected; only those who are relatively competent writers choose such a program. Consequently, the students seeking help were those who wrote well enough but wanted to write better. From the beginning then, the Service has not borne the stigma of being “remedial” with its unpleasant medical associations.

Not surprisingly, news about the Service spread and requests were heard from other sectors of the university community. Soon we had opened our doors to all university students and our staff had expanded to include graduate students in disciplines other than English. To reflect our broader base and inter-disciplinary thrust, the Service was moved out of the English Department and into the Centre for Applied Language Studies. Although our home changed however, the original impulse continued to set the tone for our teaching;

that is, rather than providing band-aids and splints for the linguistically deformed, we conceived of our task as that of helping competent students to write better.

Our Students

Early on, in part in response to the university's Office of Planning, Analysis and Statistics, and partly for our own purposes, we performed a careful analysis of the students coming to the Service and the nature of their writing problems (what might be called, in other circles, an informal needs analysis).

As to our students, our statistics revealed that they come from all disciplines, with a preponderance from the humanities and social sciences: specifically about 55% from the humanities and 35% from the social sciences. About half the essays dealt with in the humanities are English essays, and half of those in the social sciences are political science papers. In addition, history, law, journalism, sociology, film studies, philosophy and biology all represent important clients. To a large extent, those disciplines not represented do not elicit much writing in English.

A second significant feature of our student body is their academic level. Only about one-third of the students visiting the Service are first-year students. The remaining two-thirds include students in second, third or fourth year of undergraduate programs or students enrolled at any level in graduate programs. The preponderance are students in their second or third year. Joyce Steward, Director of the Writing Lab at the University of Wisconsin at Madison, has noticed this same phenomenon and has concluded: "The wide range of our requests led us long ago to agree with those who conclude that composition instruction may be wasted on large numbers of freshmen. Students begin to write better—and to seek help with their writing—at the level of upper-division courses, where suddenly they have something important to say, and someone to say it to" (1975:32). The point seems to

be that for writing instruction to be perceived as useful, for the teaching of writing to stick, a degree of intellectual maturity is necessary, and many students don't achieve that maturity until their upper years. One advantage of our writing service is that we can respond to different rates of maturation; students come when they feel the need. Consequently, the teaching is provided at the moment at which the learner is most receptive.

Writing Problems

In order to define the nature of our students' writing problems, we drew up a set of possible categories, in part based on an early schematization by the university's planning office. The categories are listed and specified on the accompanying chart (Table 1), as are the results of our analysis. The data were compiled by the tutors for each student attending the Service over a complete year. Two separate diagnoses were made of the writing of each student: one by the tutor and one by the student. Our statistics have been compiled on the basis of the tutor's assessments only; we were interested and encouraged, however, to see how frequently the two assessments coincided.

The statistics revealed in Table 1 may be surprising to some. Only 12% of students whose first language is English write with frequent major grammatical errors, and only a further 22% were diagnosed as having such difficulties on even an occasional basis. In contrast, almost 65% have difficulties in the prewriting stage, and a further 53% have thought problems. In fact, according to a separate tally, over 90% of native speakers have either prewriting or thought problems.

These figures should explode the currently held myth concerning the writing problems of university students or, at least, of students attending the Carleton University Writing Tutorial Service. For members of the community outside of the University, if not for those within, the impression is

Table 1

Writing Problems Encountered by Carleton University
Native Speakers Attending the Writing Tutorial Service

Problem	Percentage of Students
Prewriting problems: how to analyse assignment, approach topic, explore subject, do research	64.9
Problems in organization: faulty logic; poor development of ideas; lack of coherence, etc.	53.4
Problems with format and conventions, including footnote and bibliographic form, etc.	23
Frequent major problems in grammar: lack of subject-verb agreement; errors in pronoun case, reference and agreement; major faults in sentence structure (comma-splice, run-on, etc.)	12.2
Occasional major problems in grammar	22.3
Frequent minor problems in grammar, usage, sentence structure and mechanics: dangling modifiers, faulty parallelism, errors in punctuation, etc.	20.9
Occasional minor problems in grammar	35.1
Frequent problems in diction: imprecise use and misuse of words, inappropriate levels of language, etc.	19.6
Occasional problems in diction	24.3
Frequent stylistic problems: awkwardness, wordiness, lack of clarity and precision, etc.	33.1
Occasional stylistic problems	35.1

that such services as the WTS are intended for students with so-called "remedial" problems. By that is meant problems with grammar such as lack of subject-verb agreement, errors in pronoun case and major faults in sentence structure, with the consequent mistakes in punctuation. And the general assumption is that these problems should have been dealt with earlier and that we are therefore compensating for the deficiencies of the school system.

The nature of the writing problems revealed by our statistics, however, is very different. As we have seen, relatively few students have persistent difficulties with grammar. In many cases, students, whose writing does display such weaknesses, have more serious prethinking and organizational problems as well. Often, once the thinking problems are worked out, the grammatical problems, especially those relating to sentence structure, are resolved as well. Admittedly, these problems do not always disappear so easily; they often have to be dealt with separately. However, this teaching is only a small part of our work at the Service.

The majority of the students coming to the Writing Tutorial Service come for help with problems that we characterize loosely as prethinking and thought problems—all the problems relating to the analysis of the assignment, the delimitation of the topic, the determination of the appropriate research strategies, and the attempt to find significance and focus in the data amassed; in a word, problems that cannot be solved by reciting a rule and doing a set of exercises.

These problems relate very intimately to the nature of the material studied, the kind of thinking required in the discipline, and the degree of abstraction required of the student at his level of study. Given, then, that writing problems are tied so closely to the complexity of the intellectual material the writer is required to confront, an explanation for the number of students seeking our help emerges that is different from the popular notion that present day students are underpre-

pared and unqualified for university. Perhaps the reason is simply that the material they must confront in college is more challenging than their high school work. And, as Lloyd-Jones points out, "as one's intellectual reach is extended, one's once adequate writing is no longer sufficient ... To some extent, confusing prose is a sign of active engagement with new ideas" (1977:220). Because universities present "new ideas," students experience difficulties reworking their "old skills with language ... to fit the new circumstances." In other words, these writing problems are inevitable as long as universities continue to challenge the minds of their students beyond the level of their achievement at secondary school.

H. A. Gleason, Jr. takes this argument one step further. In discussing the writing abilities of his students at the University of Toronto over the last ten years, he argues that "students are ... writing about as well as they used to" (1978:25). However, what have changed are the demands made of them. "For quality university work in the seventies, standards higher than those of the fifties or the thirties are essential." His point is the following one:

There has been a continuing change in university curricula so gradual as to have been largely unnoticed. The trend has been away from mere learning of fact to understanding of principles, and the concepts presented have tended towards increasing abstractness and elegance. I pick up from time to time first-year textbooks in science subjects that I taught thirty years ago but have not followed closely over the intervening years. Always I am struck to see how profound the changes are. I mean that literally—the changes are overwhelmingly toward more profound treatments. By and large, in his central substantive courses, today's university student is wrestling with more difficult material to comprehend and to state than was yesterday's. (Gleason 1978:25)

Philosophy

The philosophy and teaching strategies of the Writing Tutorial Service have been determined empirically on the basis of the nature of the writing problems encountered by the students enrolled. Our approach to the teaching of writing is based on the following assumptions. First, writing is learning. University teachers give students writing assignments not so

that they will thereby display their mastery of the material but rather so that they will, by the very act of writing, master that material. Further, to write within a discipline is to internalize the thinking strategies and the modes of analysis of that discipline.

Second, given that writing is intimately connected with learning and with thinking, the problems students encounter in writing may be indices of the complexity of the subject-matter they are encountering rather than symptoms of their inadequate training or personal deficiencies. Our attitudes towards, and expectations of, the students attending the Service are defined by this awareness.

Third, the teaching of writing includes far more than the teaching of editorial skills or correctness. To teach writing, one must teach the whole process of composing from the earliest stages of prewriting up to and including the final copy-editing. One of the failings of traditional composition teaching has been its focus on only the last stages of the writing process. There is a historical reason for this truncation (see Corbett, 1965); however, without going into a history of the teaching of writing, I would like to point out that recent theories of the teaching of composition have involved a return to the classical view of rhetoric, a much broader conception that entailed a study not only of stylistic elaboration and variation but also an analysis of prewriting or "inventio," an attempt to define a procedure for discovering what one has to say about a subject. It is this broader conception of rhetoric that underlies our approach.

Fourth, in our teaching, in fact, we focus primarily on the earliest stages of composing—the prewriting, believing that the quality of the initial work, although invisible, defines the quality of the completed piece of writing; or, at least, that a good beginning is a necessary if not a sufficient condition of effective writing. This initial preparatory stage has been much neglected partly because it has been so little

understood and partly because it is not amenable to teaching in the traditional classroom. Recently, there has been some fruitful research directed towards an understanding of the creative process, in general, and the composing process, in particular, and we try to glean what is useful from this research for incorporation into our teaching practices. (For a review of such research, see Freedman, 1981.)

Fifth, to teach students effective strategies of prewriting, we must focus on the process of writing rather than the product. In fact, a study of the product belies the process: the former is linear, complete, inevitable, effortless; the latter is recursive, open-ended, tortured. Our strategy is to interrelate with the student during his process of composition; we discuss with him the approaches he has been taking to his topic and his assignment, and we help him to discover for himself appropriate strategies for defining his assignment, engaging with his subject, amassing his material, coming to his own insights and syntheses, and defining his audience's demands. An incidental advantage to this is that we teach at the moment at which teaching is most likely to stick, when the student is most motivated to learn.

As a corollary to this focus on the process of writing, we concentrate on the student's work rather than sets of exercises. Handouts and exercises are used on a supplementary basis to reinforce certain rules, especially relating to mechanics and punctuation, but our primary focus is always on the student's own writing.

A sixth premise is that, although there may be certain common denominators, modes of writing vary according to discipline, just as modes of thinking do. Different disciplines imply different heuristic procedures for arriving at insights; they involve different organizational patterns and rhetorical strategies; and they suggest different relationships between writer and reader. To use rather simplistic examples, the first person is as taboo to scientists as the ubiquitous passive

of scientific writing is to English professors. At the Writing Tutorial Service we respect the different demands and different requirements of other disciplines; we do not try to impose English Department standards on sociology papers, nor do we label as jargon the terminology of every field but ours.

A seventh premise underlying our teaching is that one cannot write writing, one can only write about something for someone (Johnson 1962:109). It is a sensitivity to this "someone," an awareness of audience that we try to inculcate in our students. Students need to become sensitive to differing demands made by differing audiences: if your reader is a specialist in the field, a certain tone must be maintained and certain assumptions can be taken for granted; writing for an academic audience imposes certain demands; writing for a reader who is also an examiner imposes others. The concepts of correctness and appropriate usage are taught in this context of audience awareness.

Our role vis-à-vis the students, however, is not that of audience. We are their teachers, their advisers, and their allies in the tasks of writing and audience analysis. To be both audience and teacher often raises difficulties for the teacher of composition; these difficulties we do not face. Similarly, our roles as teachers are not undercut by our having to be examiners and evaluators as well.

Finally, we operate on the assumption that the Writing Tutorial Service provides as many benefits to the graduate students who tutor as to the undergraduates who are taught. The teaching forces them to clarify their own assumptions and possible misconceptions concerning writing. They frequently comment on the growth of their own writing skills as well as their increased sensitivity to the written word. In addition, during workshops and regular meetings, their teaching is placed within a theoretical context so that they may gain an understanding of both the practical and theoretical

dimensions of a discipline that tends to be neglected in most university curricula.

Teaching Strategies

Given the nature of our students' writing problems, and given too our philosophy, how do we respond to their requests for help? Broadly speaking, we respond by interacting with the students in the course of their assignments, while they are composing. This allows us to offer the kind of guidance they need at the moment it is needed. Our overall strategy is not to teach after the fact but to intervene during the process of writing, although "intervene" may be too strong a word, for our thrust is always to elicit, probe, provoke, redirect—in short, to help the student discover for himself within himself the appropriate strategies.

Our teaching strategies are dependent on the stage of the composing process at which we are required to intervene, and we have found that there are several such critical points, each implying a different approach. These can be plotted against the following model of the composing process, based on the early work of Wallas (1926), and the later refinements of Young, Becker, and Pike (1970), and Winterowd (1979). We can distinguish the following stages: starting-point; exploration; incubation; illumination; composing; reformulation; editing.¹

The starting point is the stage at which the task is analysed and perceived as a problem to be solved; ideally the writer will experience a genuine need to write, to solve the problem set by the assignment, and will dimly perceive what Young *et al.* (1970:92) call the known unknown, the solution

¹ These stages are not necessarily meant to represent separable or discrete segments of the composing process: the illumination may, and frequently does coincide with the composing; for some individuals, the first draft is the final one, the editing and reformulating occurring internally either before or during the physical act of writing. Furthermore, the scheme is not intended to suggest a linear sequence in time.

that is being sought. The second stage, the exploration, includes all the initial, intellectual preparatory activity: amassing data; doing research; critically analysing the material amassed; dredging from one's memory relevant experiences, ideas, constructs; analysing; comparing; synthesizing; and, in general, focusing one's intellectual powers intensely on the problem to be solved. During the incubation, in contrast, the conscious mind ceases from activity so that the unconscious, subconscious, or suprarational powers may operate. Creative figures in many disciplines have attested to the necessity of this conscious withdrawal, and withdrawal of consciousness, from the task at hand to free our less understood creative forces. The illumination is the moment of insight, the "eureka," during which what was seemingly shapeless, disjointed, and without order suddenly assumes form and pattern.

The fifth stage, the composing, involves the physical act of writing the first draft, an activity that may precede or succeed the illumination, or perhaps, more typically, may itself bring about or constitute the moment of insight. The reformulation is, in part, what Wallas (1928) called the "verification," the testing of the insight in language; sentences, words, paragraphs are reworked to approximate more closely the intended meaning while the meaning itself is reshaped under the pressure of its formulation into language. The editing, as opposed to the reformulation, involves the final refinements, the concern with the superficial, technical matters of mechanics, punctuation, spelling, and "the adjustment of the 'surface' of the text so that it approximates ... Edited Standard English" (Winterowd, 1979).

Admittedly crude, this scheme is useful in our teaching, allowing us first, to locate those stages where we can successfully intervene and indicating, second, where we ought not to interfere. What is too frequently ignored is that certain phases of the composing process are not only unconscious,

but that they resent and resist the intrusion of consciousness. There are times during our writing when we must turn off; sometimes, the best advice is to go away and take a walk or a nap. On the other hand, for the unconscious creative forces to be able to operate, there must have been sufficient preceding conscious, intellectual preparation; the unconscious must be sufficiently stocked, there must be something to incubate.

Although some such sequencing is implied, this model of the composing process is not intended to be linear. On the contrary, the process is essentially recursive, the reformulation often revealing the need for more exploration, and the composing sometimes necessitating a return to the starting-point. Much of our teaching is directed towards helping students to realize and respect this recursiveness, this need not just to revise but sometimes to go back to the beginning. In this, we must fight against the bias of most composition textbooks and much composition teaching which reduce the process of writing to the simplistic: choose a subject, restrict your topic, write a thesis sentence, make an outline, then write your essay. Such a view is naive and dangerous, diminishing the creative potential of the composing process by insisting that the "meaning" precedes the writing and ascribing to the process a linearity that does not exist.

Remembering, then, that the sequence is recursive rather than linear, we can locate our teaching at four critical points in the composing process: the starting-point; the exploration; the reformulation; and, to a lesser extent, the editing.

At the starting-point, our thrust is twofold. First, we try to help students become engaged in their assignment, or, if they have a choice, find a task that is meaningful to them, one where they themselves can feel what Young (1970) calls the initial "incongruity" of the problem and the accompanying pressure to seek a resolution. Second, we must make sure that students understand the nature of the assignment, understand that what is required, for example, is a critical

analysis rather than a plot summary, a synthesis rather than a repetition of facts or generalizations. The difficulty is that the conceptual task required is sometimes beyond what students have previously undertaken, and they either do not perceive this or fumble in attempting what is just beyond their reach.

This is not to suggest that students have been inadequately prepared for the intellectual demands made in university. On the contrary. Such increasing demands are surely to be expected in the course of a normal intellectual progression. As we delve more deeply into any discipline, our intellectual powers are continually being extended. Since writing involves not only transcribing but internalizing the thinking of the discipline, the task of writing becomes commensurately more difficult with each intellectual leap forward.

Some years ago, a Biology professor approached us to organize a pilot program for his third year class in ecology. He was concerned that his students weren't writing well. These were all third or fourth year students, most in the Honours program, and they had generally performed successfully in previous Biology courses, all of which required some writing of essays as well as lab reports. In this course, however, there was a significant breakdown in their writing abilities. Some discussion revealed that the level of conceptualization demanded by the professor and the discipline differed significantly from that previously required. First, students were taken out of the lab to confront the real world, with all its untidiness. Second, they were asked to generalize on the basis of this real data, to weigh probabilities, to evaluate other scientific studies in the context of their own research, to analyse and synthesize the work of others, and to formulate an overall conceptual framework. In the face of these more complex demands, many students were not able to perform as successfully as they had with simpler tasks.

Pedagogically, what was interesting was how explicit this

professor was about the level of his expectations. In his first lecture and periodically throughout the course, he described precisely the kind of thinking required and the nature of the writing he expected. Yet the students did not hear; they filtered out what they could not assimilate.

It was not sufficient for them to be told: they had to be brought to see for themselves. What is necessary in such situations is lengthy dialoguing, patient eliciting, in which students are encouraged to discover for themselves the kind of critical activity required by their assignments. Such teaching is not easy; in the final analysis, the students cannot be taught, they can only be brought to learn. And tutoring, especially individualized tutoring in a non-threatening environment, has proved to be far more conducive to such learning than lecturing.

The second stage at which we can profitably intervene is the preparatory stage, the exploration. Most simply, we direct students to the appropriate sources for research, we show them how to gather data, amass material. But we also encourage them to think about the data they have amassed, to compare, to contrast, evaluate, analyse, synthesize. By asking probing questions, by eliciting their own critical appraisal, we encourage them to focus intensely and critically as they explore, to place what they are discovering within an overall conceptual framework.

Our most important pedagogical technique, then, is talk; primarily questions, on our part, to elicit as much talk as possible on the part of the student. We may be providing opportunities for talk to students who have not yet learned the pleasure of playing with ideas, of bringing their intellectual experience to bear on their lives. We try to help them discover how to place their ideas within the context of their intellectual lives, teaching them a skill they can later practice on their own. What we hope they will learn is the creative power of language itself. If, at times during the composing

process, language seems inert and recalcitrant in our struggle to formulate our meanings, at others, language can be immensely generative, opening new vistas, creating insights where there were none. Through talk in this exploratory stage as well as through writing, students can learn the creative power of language, something that is not realized in the lecture-hall to library stall routine of many students' lives.

The next three stages of the writing process, incubation, illumination, and composing, must come on their own if they come at all. We do not and cannot intervene; we can only assure students that if the scene has been sufficiently set in the initial stages, the insight will come.

Writing the first draft may be as little controlled by our conscious will as the incubation and illumination; however, once that draft has been formulated, we are called on to intervene again. These are many of our most painful encounters, when we must assure the student that what he has written is good, very good indeed, as a first draft, and, that, to paraphrase the psychiatrist at the end of *Portnoy's Complaint*, now we can begin.

Revision is especially painful for our students, for all who write surely, and is something our students have not been trained to do. What they have not learned is that the composing itself is often a discovery procedure; for many of us, only by writing do we learn what we mean. We encourage students to use writing as a heuristic in this way; the result, however, is that students often only arrive at their moment of illumination, their perception of an overall organizing pattern, during the course of their writing, and frequently not until very late in that first draft. Unfortunately what they don't realize is that they must recompose this draft into a form acceptable in an academic essay.

In his taxonomy of discourse, James Kinneavy (1976) distinguishes various possible formal patterns of written discourse according to six aims. Among these, he differentiates

writing in which the writer's aim is to explore a problem from that in which he intends to prove a thesis; these two are radically different, each implying a different organizational pattern for the essay. This distinction is a fruitful one for our teaching. Although the student's aim, in the first draft, may be to explore the problem and discover his ideas, in the finished version, his aim must be to prove a thesis, and the organization of his essay must be correspondingly altered.

The final stage of the composing process is editing, a point at which we intervene in a more conventional manner; in many ways, this is the easiest kind of teaching. We teach footnoting, bibliographic form, the rules of punctuation. At this stage, too, we introduce some discussion of the conventions of usage, couched in terms of audience awareness.

Audience considerations are introduced from the earliest phases of the composing process. At the starting-point, the student must consider what his reader, in this case the teacher, expects in the assignment: a critical analysis, for example, rather than a plot summary, use of source material as well as original thinking, and so on. Similarly, in discussing the appropriate form of an academic essay, the argumentative mode rather than the exploratory, we are talking about reader expectations in part. However, the focus on the reader is most explicit and most cynical when we discuss the conventions of usage.

One advantage of our teaching is that we can assume this tone of cynicism without hypocrisy; we are, after all, never the intended audience, never the evaluators ourselves; we are only the writer's allies in the task of audience analysis. That the tutor does not grade the paper is a great asset to us, liberating both the tutor and the student from the subtle political tensions that contaminate the relationship between the student and his examiner. And the student's role towards his professor, his reader, is invariably, to use the Britton (1975) classification, that of pupil to examiner. That this can be

otherwise is not even conceived by most of our students, and we must operate within this framework. Our challenge is to help students realize that even within these limitations, writing an academic essay can be a creative act, an opportunity for real learning, and that the best writing comes where the writer is fully engaged and moves from a real perception of a problem to a genuine insight, refined and formulated through language.

This then is the kind of teaching that takes place in the Writing Tutorial Service. We use certain supplementary strategies, but the core of the teaching is always the one-on-one dialoguing over the student's own work.

Supplementary Teaching Strategies

Those supplementary teaching strategies which are used were introduced to help cope with the problem of increasing numbers, for the students flock to the Service. Whatever can be taught outside the tutorial structure is so taught. We have, for example, some auto-instructional material as well as some audio cassettes for teaching the conventions of punctuation and bibliographic form. Even this teaching, however, must be reinforced in the context of the student's own work, but the general principles can be learned by listening to tapes or reading handbooks, with a considerable saving of our valuable tutorial time.

In addition, we have set up little workshops on the development of style; that is what we have chosen to call these sessions because the term is imprecise and general enough to cover what we do, which is sentence-combining. Research studies keep pointing to the same conclusions, whether the studies have been undertaken with elementary school children or secondary, with college students or adults:² intensive and extensive practice with sentence-combining leads to greater syntactic fluency. Our workshops on sentence-combining are

² See, for example, Mellon (1969), O'Hare (1973), and Morenberg *et al.* (1978).

recommended for those students whose writing seems immature as well as for those whose writing is marred by those syntactic messes which are marked by marginal "awks" and which generally indicate the student is attempting a structure he is not yet comfortable with. Tutors are encouraged to resist the temptation to tell these students: simplify your style, break up your sentences into smaller units, avoid these complex structures. To recommend that the students return to safe structures they have mastered is to stifle their attempts at growth. Instead, we either encourage individual work with sentence-combining, using models of those syntactic structures the student hasn't mastered, or we encourage the student to participate in our workshop on style. Working within a group has great advantages; the students need to discuss the stylistic options available, to see each others' combinations, to hear the responses of others to the versions they have produced in order to realize for themselves the syntactic possibilities of the language.

The Tutors

The success or failure of such a program clearly rests with the teachers. Who are these tutors, then, and how are they selected? The tutors are all students pursuing graduate degrees, although not only nor even primarily in English. We choose tutors from all disciplines in the humanities—history as well as English; from the social sciences—economics, political science, sociology; and from such professional fields as social work. In our experience, English students have no better training in writing or the teaching of writing than graduates of other disciplines. Nor do we select the tutors specifically on the basis of their own writing skills, although their admission to graduate school attests to their successful performance as undergraduates.

The tutors are, in part, self-selected: an interest in working as a writing tutor counts for a great deal. In part, they are

screened during interviews where, although we discuss writing, what is evaluated is not their knowledge of that discipline (to expect any graduate student, even a former teacher, to know much about the field is unrealistic), but rather those indefinable personality characteristics that make tutorial teaching successful—warmth, ease, tact, firmness as well as those intellectual qualities that will make the tutors receptive to new learning—curiosity, openness, flexibility, tolerance.

Despite the obvious disadvantage of having to retrain a new contingent every year or two, the use of graduate students as tutors has great advantages. First, graduate students are continually engaged in the process of writing themselves—papers, seminars, reports, etc. Surely it is distance in time from the composing process that allows teachers to falsify and simplify the writing process in the manner of most composition textbooks. Graduate students have not forgotten the pain and the "chaos" of the early stages, and, if they are encouraged to look honestly at their own experience before talking glibly to others, they will not dismiss their students with facile platitudes.

A second advantage of staffing the Writing Tutorial Service with graduate students is that the tutors themselves benefit as much from the experience as the undergraduates who are taught. The teaching forces them to clarify their own assumptions and possible misconceptions concerning writing.

At the beginning of the year, the tutors participate in a three-day intensive training session: half-days are spent on the presentation of theory, half-days on pedagogic techniques, focusing on actual essays written by Carleton students in preceding years. The theory presented in the morning is translated immediately into practice each afternoon.

The training sessions have several objectives. The first is preventative: to point out the futility, the ultimate irrelevance of traditional composition teaching, with its emphasis on errors and conventions of usage, on the product

rather than the process. Our graduate students are in the happy position of having been taught little about composition in their previous schooling, so that the deprogramming is primarily a warning against turning to the conventional composition handbooks and rhetorics that proliferate in our bookstores and libraries. Second, the students are given sufficient introduction to creativity theory and recent research findings about the composing process to locate their teaching, to identify the strategic points for intervention, and to pin-point consequently the most effective techniques for intervention. This theoretic introduction is necessarily brief and sketchy, enough only to whet their appetites for further exploration and to provide the tutors with something of a framework within which to place their teaching. At the first meeting too, tutors are given a packet of material to study, including certain seminal articles on tutoring and writing, a bibliography of further readings in the field, and a statement outlining the underlying philosophy of the Writing Tutorial Service. Such an explicit statement is necessary for those who have not been trained to think in a disciplined way about writing and who need a context in which to operate as teachers of writing.

Throughout the year, the tutors continue to meet regularly with the Director to discuss specific pedagogic problems and teaching techniques. The theory introduced in the training session is re-examined in the light of their experiences teaching; the discussions that ensue are typically lively, incisive, and focused, indicative of the emotional, intellectual, and professional commitment of these graduate students to their task. At the end of the year when asked to assess the value of their experience, the tutors have been unanimous in insisting on the personal satisfaction as well as the intellectual growth afforded them by their work.

Conclusion

And what of the value of the program to the students? We have as yet developed no formal procedures for measuring "results." Some instructors have informally compared the writing of students who visited the Service regularly with those who did not and have found a significant improvement in the writing skills of the former. Generally, in fact, faculty response has been enthusiastic and encouraging. What is more significant however, given that attendance is entirely voluntary, is the number of students who visit the Service and the number of times they return. We have increased the number of tutors and still our tutoring schedule is fully booked—weeks in advance. Since the program offers no extrinsic rewards, no university "credit," presumably the students must recognize some intrinsic value in their sessions at the Writing Tutorial Service. By coming voluntarily, by coming in such numbers, and by returning repeatedly, these students are the most convincing proof of the success of the program.

By their continued participation in the Writing Tutorial Service, our students also reveal, first, the intensity of their commitment to developing their writing skills and, second, given the emphasis of our program, their awareness that writing entails far more than the superficial qualities highlighted in the public outcry about literacy. Along with the professors who keep assigning writing, the students enrolled in our program implicitly recognize that writing is, as Janet Emig (1977) insists, a mode of learning and, in fact, a mode of knowing that is central to the academic enterprise. And perhaps the public outcry over literacy, however simplistic, inadequate, and clumsy its expression, may itself imply the same underlying recognition of the centrality of writing not just as a means of communicating but as a means of knowing and growing—a recognition along with Richard Lloyd-Jones that

"all human beings always need to write better, for in language a person discovers humanity, and in written language the essential human being is captured in a frozen moment for examination" (1977:218-19).

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A Process Orientation in ESL Writing

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Introduction

In this paper I am going to discuss the way in which a process-oriented approach to ESL writing is implemented in a credit ESL course at Carleton University. I would like to note that this course is still being developed. Some parts or aspects are more fully developed than others, and certain problems will be noted and further changes suggested.

The main thrust of this paper is in two areas: 1) the implementation of a process-oriented approach to ESL writing, and 2) the development of a course through successive offerings. Thus we are talking about both the writing process, and the teaching process.

In the first part of the paper, I will discuss what it means to focus on the process rather than the product, and briefly summarize the conception of reading and writing evolving from recent research. In the second part of the paper I discuss how this orientation or focus translates into course objectives, and classroom activities.

For the teacher and the student, focus on the process of writing means focussing on the writer doing the work as it is

going on rather than on the work itself after it is over. The teaching of writing has traditionally focused on the product. The teacher or textbook gives explanations about what good writing is, about grammar, and organization, generally based on rules to follow. Then the students do exercises on particular points of grammar or rhetoric, and writing assignments on particular topics. The teacher looks over the students' written work, making comments and corrections. The students then look at the corrections of the mistakes that were made, perhaps carrying out some activity with these corrections, or simply throw the work in the garbage. A consequence of focussing on the product is an emphasis on the surface forms of the language, on the words chosen, on rules of language usage in isolation—often prescriptive rules reflected in comments such as "don't use a preposition at the end of a sentence," "use connecting words," "don't make sentences too long." These are rules which are to be applied independently of the meaning being expressed. Thus, a focus on the product is a focus much more on form and much less on meaning. To the extent that there is a focus on meaning, it is not meaning as it would be perceived by a particular reader in a particular context of communication, but rather meaning as the teacher perceives it in isolation.

Focussing on the process—or on the writer during the process of writing—concentrates on the problems or difficulties that the writer goes through and the blocks that writer arrives at. The emphasis is on solving problems in putting meaning across. Additionally, for the reasons noted below, there is a focus on the reader, an awareness of the reading process and what a reader goes through in trying to make sense of a text.

Current Conceptions of Reading and Writing

This process orientation in teaching ESL writing reflects a recent emphasis in research—an emphasis on the processes

involved and the strategies used in various areas of human endeavor. There is a large body of literature related to investigations of the processes of reading and writing and the relationship between them. In addition, there is important work done in the ways in which the results of these investigations have influenced pedagogy.

Recent research in the area of reading has pointed out the close link between the processes of reading and writing—an “interaction between writer and reader mediated through the text” (Widdowson 1979:174). The reader, in trying to understand a text, makes use of the knowledge of conventions of writing, a knowledge of how textual transmission works: “the reader understands that a text was composed through a series of deliberate choices on the writer’s part, and the reader understands the conventions that governed these choices” (Olson, Duffy and Mack, 1980:69). There is an increasing awareness that a reader does not simply match a stored meaning to the words or groups of words that s/he reads, but rather that the activity creates a personal meaning through the words in terms of the background that s/he brings to the text.

Recent research into the writing process by a number of researchers has indicated that our conceptions about the way effective and unfrustrated writers carry out the task of writing is quite different from the conception that we traditionally learn in school.

Our traditional school-based conception of writing is that it takes place (or should take place) in three linear steps. The first step is to make a clear, straightforward outline of the major points and subpoints that we want to include. The second step, then, is the actual “writing” —putting these points into words, as accurately and correctly as possible. The third step, once this is done, is to make any necessary alterations or corrections to the surface level of the text. There is often a great resistance to “going back to do something over”, which

is seen as a negative unnecessary chore. There are a number of assumptions about writing which are implied by this three-step procedure. First, it is assumed that when we write the outline we already know what we want to say, and that our ideas will not change as we write. (A common belief is that a *good* writer knows what s/he wants to say before beginning to write.) A further assumption is that the second step—putting the outlined ideas into words—is best conceived and carried out as a single, straightforward task. The subsequent outcome is expected to be a draft which needs little changing.

Recent research, corroborated by our experience with students, seems to indicate that it is precisely the attempt to follow this pattern which results in many of the problems and frustrations that writers have. We find that blocks and frustrations often seem to occur when a writer is trying to do many complex things at once. For example, the second step of the three-step procedure described above means working out the detailed ideas, organizing them, putting them into words, and finding exactly the right words and sentences to express these ideas all at the same time. We frequently find writers getting frustrated by ideas which shift and change as they are trying to write them down. Or writers who do not know where to begin and so cannot get started. Or writers who begin over and over, each time trying a different order for their ideas. If, at the same time as all this, the writer is trying to produce polished prose and memorable sentences, the chances of a breakdown increase greatly. And this attempt to produce polished prose brings with it another risk—if the writer, after a great deal of thought and effort produces the “perfect sentence,” it becomes a great deal more difficult to throw it out if it no longer fits the overall picture. In other words, the words and sentences, rather than the ideas, begin to control the writing.

The way that the writing task is handled by experienced writers (as this is beginning to be revealed by investigations

into the writing process) is quite different from the way that we were taught to handle a writing task in school. First, these effective writers tend to break the process up into subprocesses, any of which can be handled independently rather than several simultaneously. Second, these effective writers tend to go back and forth frequently from one subprocess to another. They feel free to return to a previous activity and redo it based on new information or changes in ideas. Following these two procedures—breaking the process into subprocesses and going back and forth between them—turns out to be quite different from trying to do several things at once, and from following a linear progression through the stages. Third, these effective writers tend to have many strategies or techniques to try to deal with problems that they run into. They tend to take a problem-solving approach to the question of writing and have a variety of strategies to try.

In addition to the research into the processes of reading and writing, there has also been major work done in the area of teaching writing, work which has emphasized many of the above-mentioned aspects of the writing process. (See Graves 1983, Flower 1981, Elbow 1973, Young *et al.* 1970.)

The Process of Course Development

In this section, I will discuss the ways in which the theoretical notion of process orientation can affect the practical matters of course development and day-to-day teaching. Note that this is not an application from theory to practice: practical matters inform and alter specific theoretical points as much as theory informs and alters practice, and, as will become clear in the following discussion, there is no one to one correspondence between theoretical principles and classroom activities.

An intervening connecting layer between the theoretical stance of process orientation and the actual classroom activities which are carried out in practice is the setting of various

levels of objectives. At the "highest" level are the target objectives—what we are hoping to achieve by giving (and from the students' point of view, by taking) the course in the first place. Such objectives are not behavioural—i.e. they do not describe behaviours expected of the students at the end of the course. Rather they can be considered "target" in the sense of capabilities we are aiming toward. To get to these end points, we can follow a number of different possible routes. These possible routes can be mapped out via a number of levels of enabling objectives. (This process of linking target objectives and learning/teaching objectives is treated in detail in Woods, mimeo.)

Since a process approach is one unfamiliar to most students, the initiative for setting the "higher" level objectives comes from the teachers; an attempt is made to allow students' input to filter up through the activities as they are progressing, and back through retrospective discussions about the course.

The target objectives for the course I am describing in this paper are based on very general characteristics of students taking the course. The students are ones whose first language is not English, ones who are enrolled in regular university courses, and ones who have problems doing the writing required in these courses, problems related to the quality of the work they hand in as well as to the difficult and lengthy process they go through to produce this work. The target objectives for these students are:

- 1) to become productive, unfrustrated writers,
- 2) to produce clear, effective and readable written academic work.

Using these target objectives as a starting point, I proposed to the students a set of enabling objectives which could provide a possible route to be followed. In setting out these enabling objectives, I tried to make explicit a number of my assumptions, related to but not necessarily a part of the pro-

cess orientation. These assumptions are, in a sense, part of my "personal theory" of learning/teaching writing. First, an awareness of the process of reading (what a reader goes through while reading and of those things which make reading difficult), of his/her own process of writing, and of the processes of writing followed by effective unfrustrated writers will help students develop their ability to write. Second, the most effective means to develop this awareness is primarily through experience, and only secondarily through explicit indication. In other words, a writer will learn more quickly and thoroughly by experiencing the reading process, by experiencing his/her own writing process in detail, and by experiencing the process that a 'good' writer goes through, rather than simply being given information about these processes.

From these factors—target objectives and the above assumptions—come a set of enabling objectives:

A) developing awareness of

- i) one's own process of writing,
- ii) effective writers' processes,
- iii) the process of reading;

B) trying out and developing new strategies to make the writing process easier and more effective.

From this relatively "high level" set of enabling objectives come a more "immediate" set of enabling objectives, ones which describe in more detail the means by which we can move towards these "higher level" enabling objectives; these are manifested in terms of the units of the course (described below). The actual classroom activities which are intended to lead toward the various levels of objectives are integrated into the course design, and many recur at various points during the course. Many of the activities focus on what the writer is doing or could do at different stages of the writing process, and on trying out and "experiencing" alternative strategies.

This multi-layered view of the course, from target objectives to classroom activities, is illustrated in Appendix A.

The Design and Organization of the Course

The best way for me to indicate the way in which the activities relate to the objectives is to describe the design and organization of the course. In describing the course organization, I will also describe the activities which make up the course.

I should mention at this point that the organization, choice of classroom activities and choice of writing strategies are not fixed in terms of inclusion or sequencing. The course is still developing, and I am experimenting with different ordering of the units, and I am emphasizing different strategies as I learn more from the students about how they can be presented and absorbed. It is not at all clear yet that any one sequencing of units is best, although it may become clear at a later point. The theme which unifies the various units is: "The Writing Process"; in a sense, it is a course *about* writing, in which many academic skills (research, reading articles, developing your thinking, listening, talking and especially writing) are needed. The skill of writing has a special status—the overall course provides a legitimate academic context into which writing practice can fall.

The units of the course form the basis of the remaining discussion.

*Outline of Course Units**Unit 1: The Writing Process*

A. Monitoring the writing process

B. Problem-solving strategies

*Unit 2: The Relationship Between Writer and Reader**Unit 3: The "Right Brain-Left Brain" Metaphor in Writing: Brainstorming vs Idea analysis**Unit 4: Working with Deeper Levels of Meaning*

Introduction to tree diagramming

*Unit 5: Misunderstandings**Unit 6: The Drafting/Feedback/Revision Cycle*

- A. Drafting tricks
- B. Finding out what a reader is going through
- C. Revising

Unit 7: *Research*

- A. Researching the reader
- B. Researching content

Unit 8: *Dealing With the Surface Level of Writing*
Surface error analysis

As I discuss each unit I will refer to the objectives, and associated sub-objectives in order to illustrate how the activities and objectives are related.

Unit 1: *The Writing Process*

This introductory unit is divided into two parts: A) Monitoring the writing process, and B) Problem-solving strategies. This unit is primarily related to two main objectives mentioned above: i) developing an awareness of one's own process and of the fact that specific aspects of the process can be manipulated or altered by using conscious strategies, and ii) developing an awareness of strategies used by experienced effective writers. These objectives are main focus points for the overall course.

A. Monitoring the writing process

For many people (both natives and second language users), writing is a hit-or-miss operation. You sit down and write: that's all there is to it on a conscious level. Students rarely think about and consciously consider specific procedural things you can try to make the process of writing easier, and the product better. These "things" are quite different from what they have typically been told in school, usually prescriptive things such as don't split infinitives, don't end a sentence in a preposition, don't repeat the same word too frequently. This kind of advice has nothing to do with procedural thinking,

and does not encourage writers to find and remove "bugs" in their own writing process. A lack of affinity/ability for "procedural thinking" means that when a writer runs into a dead-end or a block, there are few, if any, alternatives for escape.

In the early part of the course it became quite clear that most students were not used to thinking about their own procedures: I asked students (as part of a longer information-gathering) in the form of a questionnaire and in class discussions how they proceed when they write. For most of them, there was no answer to this question other than "I make an outline, I write, I correct." Both monitoring and debugging are unfamiliar processes to most students.

Since this unfamiliar notion is one which needs to be developed through the entire course, the activities of the initial unit are really just an introduction. The activities described below are some of the possibilities designed to introduce the notion of monitoring procedures.

Activity 1A.1: "Finding a Topic"

The students are given an assignment (during class and as homework) to "think of a topic to write a 2-3 page essay on." Completing the assignment is simply choosing the topic. But they are instructed to "keep notes" on what they think about while trying to work out a topic, and to answer the following questions.

1. What is the first idea you had for a topic?
2. Did this change (either a complete change, or a small shift of focus)?
3. If so, what to? Make a list of all the changes in ideas you went through.
4. Did you finally come up with a satisfactory idea?
5. If so, what is it?
6. When and where did you think of it? What were you doing when it occurred to you? What were you thinking about when it occurred to you?

Activity 1A.2: "Process Log"

The students are instructed to write the essay, either on their topic (above), or on the topic of "The Year 2000: What Will the Planet Be Like?"

They are instructed to write on one half of a vertically divided page.

On the other half, they are told to write comments about what they are doing, about what time it is, about any blocks or confusion, about what they are thinking, about anything they cross out, about beginning again, about what they are thinking about when they are blocked, about when they take a mental break.

Activity 1A.3: "Culture Shock"

The students are given the topic "Culture Shock: People's Experiences upon Entering a New Cultural Environment" (for example, Western culture, the culture of Canada, the culture of English Ontario, the culture of Academia, etc.). They are told to make a "procedural plan"—how they plan to get the information and produce the paper. Various plans are displayed on the board. An information-getting procedure is assigned—interviewing classmates and friends. The students are instructed to keep a log of everything that they go through in preparing the paper. When the assignment is due, students hand in the paper, and a summary of their process along with the procedural plan and log.

B. Problem-solving strategies

This part of the unit explicitly introduces a "model" of how good writers go through the process of writing: a) breaking the overall process into smaller subprocesses and b) having a repertoire of strategies for each subprocess.

Although I do not believe that it is necessary for students to learn about writing in order to improve their ability to write, I wanted the students to learn to reflect upon and discuss their own experiences while dealing with the "problems" of writing. In addition, this explicit focus is related to their stated expectations as learners: they expect to be given some explicit instruction about writing. A further reason is that it provides a framework for me to give them feedback about their writing—I can focus on a particular aspect of their writing while letting them know that other aspects will be dealt with at another time: particularly I want to avoid being persuaded to discuss sentence level work when that level is not at issue. The final reason is that the information presented is such an eye-opener, and a relief (things like "don't worry about grammar in the draft stage"), that they are both fascinated by this information and relieved at hearing it.

The model of "what an unfrustrated writer does" is summarized in Appendix B: a breakdown of the overall writing process into subprocesses, and a repertoire of categories for each.

Unit 2: *The Relationship Between Writer and Reader*

Another area crucially related to the process of writing, one which most students are unaware of, is the process of reading. They are, first, unaware of the close (although perhaps distanced in time and space) relationship between the writer and the reader, and second, unaware of the kinds of difficulties a reader may have in trying to make sense of a text.

The activity outlined below, by causing a reading breakdown, tries to develop the students' awareness of the process of reading, particularly of what it is like to be a confused reader. This activity tries to make it clear that a writer when writing a passage may have a "picture" (or background knowledge, or context, or set of assumptions) in her head; however, if a reader does not share this background, or if it is not made explicit by the writer, the reader may be left very confused. This activity is related to the major objective of taking the reader, and the reading process, into account in writing.

Activity 2.1: "Balloons"

The class receives copies of the passage below. They are instructed to read the passage, and while reading, to note in the margin any comments they have, any words, phrases or sentences that they do not understand.

If the balloons popped, the sound wouldn't be able to carry since everything would be too far away from the correct floor. A closed window would also prevent the sound from carrying, since most buildings tend to be well insulated. Since the whole operation depends on a steady flow of electricity, a break in the middle of the wire would also cause problems. Of course, the fellow could shout, but the human voice is not loud enough to carry that far. An additional problem is that a string could break on the instrument.

Then there could be no accompaniment to the message. It is clear that the best situation would involve less distance. Then there would be fewer potential problems. With face to face contact, the least number of things could go wrong. (Bransford and Johnson, 1973:719)

After they have finished, individuals are asked to turn the article over and to summarise the main idea. When they have difficulty doing this, we discuss as a group the problems they had in understanding the article. Then they are given the picture below, which provides a context for the article. Using the context provided, they try again to summarise the article.



(adapted from Bransford and Johnson, 1973:718)

This activity also has two purposes related to preparing students for activities to come later in the course. It serves as an introduction to the notion of explicit versus implicit information, a crucial notion in several subsequent activities. It also introduces them to the activity of making their lack of understanding clear, which is important later when they are learning to give feedback on each other's writing (see Unit

6B).

In addition to this activity, a number of articles about the relationship between reading and writing are assigned, particularly Bransford and Johnson (1973), which shows the importance of context on comprehension, and Steffenssen *et al.* (1973) which shows the effects of cultural background on comprehension. These are aimed at revealing the kind of assumptions a writer might take for granted on the part of a reader, and thus leave implicit.

Unit 3: *The "Right Brain-Left Brain" Metaphor in Writing:* Brainstorming vs Idea analysis

By means of a metaphor (the right brain-left brain dichotomy) which has been popularized a great deal recently with regards to different kinds of learning (for example, *Drawing on the Right Side of the Brain* and *Writing the Natural Way*), this unit attempts to illustrate different kinds of strategies which can be used for getting, developing and re-developing ideas to serve as input to a writing task.

Although there is a danger that the metaphor might be interpreted literally by students, drawing the dichotomy is a useful way to illustrate out-of-the-ordinary alternatives to dealing with the "idea stage" of the writing process. In this case, the dichotomy is treated as a teaching tool and not an attempt to categorize mental processes.

The simple dichotomy is drawn with some of the terms popularly associated with each extreme (see Appendix C-1). The following strategies, related to one or the other extreme, are tried out during classroom activities.

Two strategies which encourage the "free spirit", the un-interfered with (but unguided) movement through a series of associations, are 1. freewriting (as described in Elbow 1973)¹,

¹ One use of freewriting which occurs throughout the course is that of students freewriting their spontaneous reactions to activities tried or experiences had during different lessons: as well as giving students practice in freewriting, this activity provides the teacher with feedback about how the students are perceiving different aspects of the course.

and 2. clustering (as described in Rico 1983). The main characteristic of freewriting is that the writing is non-stop, non-reflective. It has no logical beginning nor end: it begins with three dots (...) and ends with three dots (...). Correction, rethinking, and conscious working out are discouraged, and free flow of thoughts is encouraged. Clustering is described by Rico (1983) as: "a non-linear brainstorming process akin to free association ... that allows patterns to emerge ... It is the writing tool that accepts wondering, not-knowing, seeming chaos, gradually mapping an interior landscape as ideas begin to emerge ... Clustering acknowledges that it's okay to start writing not knowing exactly where, who, when and how. Most writers acknowledge that this is how it inevitably is anyway" (1983:28-29). Figure 3.1 below illustrates a "cluster" (adapted from Rico 1983:126).

Figure 3.1: "Cluster"



In contrast, a technique encouraging an "analytical idea search" is adapted from Flower (1981). This kind of idea search focuses on logically developing specific ideas or aspects of the topic. It can be carried out through the use of a tree diagram, and specific kinds of questions. Figure 3.2, below, illustrates the technique (adapted from Flower 1981:100).

Figure 3.2: "Tree Diagram"



A further aspect of this unit involves relating this dichotomy to the reasons for which a reader reads a text, and what this implies about the way a writer structures the text. A distinction is made between, on the one hand, reading for

enjoyment, for the purpose of entering into the experience related by the writer without close attention to the information value of the text, and, on the other hand, reading for information, for a precise understanding of the information being conveyed. Appendix C-2, which represents different types of writing, including different types of academic writing, illustrates this distinction (or more accurately, this continuum).

Unit 4: *Working Out the Deeper Layers of Meaning*

The notion of deeper layers of meaning is a notion which is difficult to get across to many student writers. It is difficult for them to realize that the reader may not share the implicit connections, the emphases and the hierarchy of meanings unconsciously assumed by the reader. Because of their previous school writing experiences, students have often come to the conclusion that faulty grammar is the chief cause of lack of understanding, and they generally consider that an outline takes care of the organization. The necessity for "deeper" level planning is not obvious, and they are therefore unfamiliar with how to deal with this kind of planning.

The technique used to develop the ability to do deeper level planning is that of the "tree diagram" mentioned above. There are a number of crucial differences between "working through a tree" and "making an outline". One important difference is that an outline is generally conceptualized as final. However, as most writers know, ideas usually develop further when written down, often leaving a gap between the plan and the written version. A tree, on the other hand, is to be conceived as dynamic: it develops, it is tentative, it is returned to in order to be altered. Furthermore, a tree can be used to decomplexify complex sub-areas: a separate sub-tree can be developed for a particular sub-area. In other words, an outline is typically used to represent the organization of ideas, whereas a tree is used to develop them.

Even more important is the following difference. An out-

line may illustrate several different levels of meaning, but it leaves implicit the connections between levels. As noted above, it is often the implicit connections, assumed by the writer but not by the reader, which leave a reader unable to grasp what is going on. A tree diagram, on the other hand, by virtue of the connecting lines, emphasizes the connections. By labelling the connecting line with the logical connection we can draw this underlying level of meaning to the surface. Figure 3.2 (above) illustrates how a tree diagram can make explicit the logical relationship of a subordinate idea to its superordinate.

The following activities are intended to allow the students to experience organizing deeper levels of meaning, to experience the strategy of nutshelling (summarizing "in a nutshell" what you are trying to say, thus making explicit the superordinate ideas), and to experience the difference between chronological organization and hierarchical or logical organization.

Activity 4.1: "E.T."

The teacher reads aloud the "Ant's Eye" description of the beginning of the movie *E.T.* (below), in a suspenseful voice. the students then, 1) freewrite for two minutes on what they thought while it was being read, and 2) write a summary of as much of the plot as was read.

Then the teacher reads aloud the "Eagle's Eye" description (below). Again the students 1) freewrite their reaction, and 2) write a summary of the plot.

Finally the differences of the two methods of presentation are discussed, in terms of the reader's understanding and impression of the text, and in terms of the writer's purpose in producing the text (using the dichotomy illustrated in Appendix C-2).

Ant's Eye Description

It's dark ... There are rustling noises in the woods ... in a clearing, a huge spaceship ... Underneath, in the bushes are some strange creatures. One creature strays far away from the spaceship. Suddenly, the creatures start running towards the spaceship, running from men with flashlights, who have appeared out of nowhere. But the one who is far away can't reach the spaceship ... it hides in the bushes. The creatures in the ship wait ... But they can wait no longer. The men are approaching. The leader at the spacecraft sends out one last call ... but there is no answer.

The ship takes off, the men watching it in amazement. The creature is left behind.

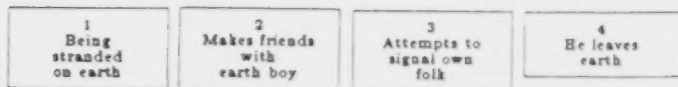
The men go home. The creature is lost, lonely, afraid and hungry. He starts wandering around until he comes to the edge of somebody's backyard ... Here he sits, hiding in the long grass. A door opens and out comes a young boy. He senses that there is something in the grass ... He starts to investigate and the creature starts to run. The boy and the creature both run and suddenly they run into each other. The boy, scared out of his wits, runs shrieking into the house. The creature hides in a tool shed in the backyard. Nobody believes the boy's story. Night after night he sits outside and waits for the creature to come back. He has to prove to his family and friends that he's not lying or crazy. And finally one night his chance comes ... (and so on).

Eagle's Eye Description

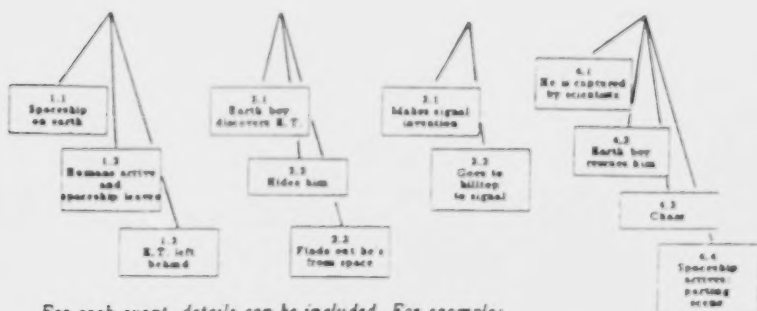
The story is about:

E.T. — a creature from outer space who gets stranded on earth. He makes friends with a small boy, who helps him to return to his own planet.

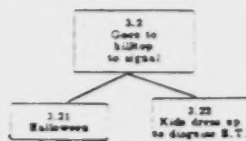
There are four main parts to the movie:



In each part, there are several main events:



For each event, details can be included. For example:



Activity 4.2: "Nutshelling a Movie"

Each student has previously chosen in class a television show or movie from the T.V. or movie guide which the other students have not seen. In particular, they are encouraged to watch a show which has multiple plots unfolding simultaneously. In class, they have to carry out the following tasks: i) organize the plots of the movie into a tree representation ii) nutshell orally (in five minutes) the plot for a classmate, and iii) write a summary of the plot which was described.

The tendency of many students is to present information in an academic paper as a "personal chronology," i.e. in a manner similar to the "ant's eye description." The purpose of the above activities are 1) to give them an awareness of the two ways of presenting information, both legitimate in different contexts, and 2) to give them the experience of trying to efficiently transmit information to a listener using a hierarchical method of organizing and presenting that information.

Unit 5: *Misunderstandings*

A major focus of the course is to sensitize the students to the cause of potential misunderstandings—to have the students become aware of where and how misunderstandings can happen, and ultimately be able to predict when their own writing could be misunderstood.

The original input for this unit is brought into play earlier in the course, through activities intended to sensitize the students to misunderstandings they can experience while reading (see Activity 2.1).

Activity 5.1: "Misunderstandings Project"

Students have been given the assignment to "collect" instances of misunderstandings of potential misunderstandings which occur over a period of several weeks, recording them on a *Misunderstandings Logsheet* (see Appendix D). The teacher primes the students by i) illustrating a number of misunderstandings (ones from his own collection, and ones which occur in class), and ii) illustrating the ways to tell when a misunderstanding may be occurring (for example, when two interlocutors are

showing signs of confusion or frustration), and iii) by explicitly providing feedback on the students' written work on ambiguous and difficult-to-interpret wordings.

The culmination of the activity is an assigned research report entitled "Misunderstandings: Causes and Consequences." From the instances of misunderstanding which the students have noted, they are to try to determine what the factors are which cause misunderstandings to happen and what are the possible communicative consequences, and to apply this work to strategies to avoid causing misunderstandings in writing.

One important objective of this unit on misunderstandings is to sensitize the students to how easily another person can misunderstand the idea you are trying to put across. This sensitization is meant to flow into the next section where the importance of reader feedback and of revision is discussed.

Unit 6: The Drafting/Feedback/Revision Cycle

A. Strategies for drafting

There are a number of strategies which can make the process of drafting—putting ideas into words—easier and less frustrating. These strategies involve i) avoiding inhibition, ii) deciding what to draft when, and iii) using time.

There are a number of suggestions provided to the students to help them avoid inhibiting their drafting. Using the freewriting technique mentioned above is one suggestion. Frequently, an inhibiting factor is stopping to worry about the correctness or appropriateness of a particular word. In order to keep the drafting flowing, students are advised, if they cannot think of the right word, to put a blank, to put a word in their own language, or to put an approximate word, to put a big asterisk in the margin of choices they feel unsatisfactory, and to write "Rough Draft" at the top of each page, so that no one will judge it as final.

To help the students break down the drafting into manageable chunks, students are advised, if their paper is long and complicated, not to try to draft it from beginning to end,

as they are likely to run into conceptual and organizational problems. They are advised instead to draft small sections separately, on separate sheets, starting with whichever small section they feel most comfortable with.

One strategy to help them to get a section drafted, and also to give them an expectation of how long drafting takes is suggested: choosing a small section and setting a limited time in order to complete it.

B. Getting reader feedback

For many students, the necessity of getting reader feedback is not always obvious, and the ability to give appropriate feedback is not always present. Previous activities, such as *"Balloons"* and the *"Misunderstandings Project"* have attempted to sensitize the students to how easily a misunderstanding can occur. In addition, comments provided by the teacher on the students' written work² are an initial attempt to sensitize students to ambiguities in their own work, as well as to ways of providing useful comments about others' work, particularly comments about the way something has been understood.

Beyond these on-going feedback activities are several possible techniques for giving students the chance to experience, face-to-face, reactions to their work. One technique, outlined by Elbow (1973) involves student writers giving each other feedback on work that they have done. Because this technique involves peer criticism, it must be handled very carefully. There must have developed a sense of "team spirit" and trust among the group. The students must have been coached to give feedback in non-judgemental terms: i.e. the focus of the feedback must be on the listener's reaction rather than

² The teacher provides the students with two types of feedback on their written work: indications of instances of surface level problems (see Unit 7, below), and comments about possible interpretations of what they have written. These latter comments are included to sensitize the students to possible unintended interpretations of the words they have used.

on the writer's paper. Although this distinction may sound subtle, it can be profoundly important in practice, allowing the writer the unusual experience of being very attentively and openly listened to, rather than being superficially judged and criticized.

Activity 6B.1: "Peer Feedback"

Alternative 1: Each student reads twice aloud, slowly and carefully, a passage s/he has written (freewritten or written from a cluster).

Alternative 2: A student circulates copies of a passage s/he has written to all students, who read it twice, slowly and carefully.

While listening or reading, the students note reactions and thoughts which evolved. After the reading is finished, the students discuss the thoughts and reactions they had during the reading (Elbow terms this "giving movies of your mind").

Activity 6B.2: "Pair Feedback"

Alternative 1: The students are grouped in pairs with their work. One student reads the other student's work aloud. The writer, listening to the other reading his/her work, listens for pauses, wrong intonation, and watches for facial reactions, signs or puzzlement.

Alternative 2: The writer reads own piece aloud; the partner has to summarize it for him/her.

A major goal of the reader feedback activity is to sensitize the students to the importance of feedback from a good reader. A secondary goal is to help them become good readers themselves. Eventually they may become good readers of their own writing, ones who can read their work with their reader in mind, and thus be able to determine themselves what kinds of things need to be revised.

C. Revision

An attempt is made via the reader feedback activities to orient the students' expectations to the amount of revising that may be necessary, depending on the purpose, the reader, the conventionality of the format, and the complexity of the content. In general, it is more than they expect.

An attempt is also made to sensitize the students to the

view that revision is a powerful tool for developing ideas, rather than a quick check at the end of the process. The activity illustrated below (taken from Elbow 1973:19-20) is intended to demonstrate how ideas can develop during revision.

Activity 6C.1: "Elbovian Three Draft Technique"

Using a topic like "what is the hardest thing about being a student in Canada or at university," students freewrite a draft in fifteen minutes. They then rest for five minutes, and then read over their work and note any central emerging issues or concerns. They then repeat the whole cycle twice more, editing their last revision for a one page essay.

Variation 1: In between drafts, or in between drafts 2 and 3 only, students read aloud what they have written, to get feedback and interpretations from other students and the teacher.

Variation 2: In between drafts, or between drafts 2 and 3 only, students work in pairs, each reading the other's aloud and providing spontaneous reactions.

For revision, there are also a number of techniques which can make the process easier. For example, drafting on different sheets for each section allows you to change the order of the ideas quickly, and to try out different orders. Also, using scissors and scotch tape can help you move ideas around, and insert and remove ideas in specific locations. (A computer/word processor can provide the same function, although it lacks the spatial advantage of spreading pages out on a table.)

Probably the most important advice we can give to students relates to attitude: an openness to possible changes. If a reader says that they do not understand something you have written, it pays off to believe them rather than to argue.

Unit 7: The Surface Level of Writing

This unit focusses on the surface level of writing—in particular producing grammatical sentences. This kind of work is particularly relevant for second language writers who have

grammatical problems, but is also for second language writers who have problems more commonly associated with first language writing. The four broad categories of surface level problems which have become evident are: i) grammatical problems (morphology, subject/verb agreement, prepositions, etc.), ii) "strange" sentences (ones which look or sound non-native like), iii) an ultra complex style ("bureaucratese"), and iv) a "talky" style (rambling, colloquial). The surface level work relates to all of these: the thrust of the work is trying to locate the factors in the writing which contribute to the inappropriateness.

Input to this unit has been provided throughout the course (although explicit attention to surface level concerns has been avoided during activities related to developing ideas and drafting). On previous work done by the students, the teacher has indicated occurrences of words or phrases contributing to the four categories of problems noted above. Students have been keeping a log of these occurrences and of possible appropriate reformulations (see Appendix E).

Activity 7.1: Locating Surface Level Problems

Using previous written work upon which the teacher has provided indications of surface level problems, students work in pairs to categorize these problems to determine which types occur most frequently. From this, they each produce a priority list of types of problems occurring in their work. Then, using their priority list of problems as a guide, they edit (examine for surface level problems) work which has not been examined by the teacher.

Activity 7.2: Report on Analysis of Surface Errors

Based on their log of surface level problems, and on the outcome of Activity 7.1, the students prepare a research report (6-8 pages, including sections on investigation procedures, results with examples, and suggestions for avoiding future errors, as well as an appendix of errors) on the results of their investigation.

Unit 8: *Research*

A. Researching the reader

It rarely occurs to students, when they are considering the idea of research, that it is possible and beneficial to research the reader—in terms of expectations, norms, cultural conventions, attitudes. In particular this is important in academic circles: the reader (a professor) may never have explicitly stated many of his/her expectations, and yet deviation from these expectations may lead to a failing grade.

This idea of researching the reader is broached initially in the context of this course: by this point the students have received a great deal of feedback and comments about what I consider to be important. The students, in groups, carry out the following activity, in order to learn to determine a professor's biases with regard to written work. The point is made that what I have told them about "good writing" may not be shared by other professors in other fields.

Activity 8A.1: "Expectations of a Reader"

Based on comments I have made in class, and on the feedback I have given them on their written work, students prepare a list of the characteristics of written work, prepare a list of the characteristics of written work which they think that I think are important.

Following this activity, a number of strategies are discussed for determining what another professor might think important, for example;

- listening to professor's words in class
- looking at professor's corrections
- looking at good students' papers
- looking at published papers in the field.

Some of the possible relevant considerations are also discussed, for example:

- style of writing
 - use of passive
 - use of I, we
- format
 - footnotes
 - references
 - sectioning

- organisation of information

Activity 8A.2: "Conventions of a Field"

For this course and another course they are taking, students prepare a list of what they think the professor would consider the characteristics of a good assignment/good written work.

Go to the library to find some articles from that field. Determine the conventions used for:

- footnotes
- references
- sectioning
- organisation of information/rhetorical structure.

Each student chooses a field to examine, and compares results with another field.

B. Researching the content

The work on researching content includes several subparts: i) finding references, ii) finding useful information, iii) avoiding plagiarism. Having students report in class on how they located references in the library and elsewhere, and sharing their strategies for collecting information and taking notes, are activities intended to promote the ability to locate relevant information.

One very important aspect to include as an integral part of the teaching is that of plagiarism: we often treat it as an unforgiveable sin rather than a cultural difference, one which could become part of the teaching. To ESL students, not confident about their own abilities in English, the look and "sound" of a printed text is very sophisticated. It is more than a matter of "being tempted" to use the author's words however. It is a matter of learning conscious strategies to avoid this tendency, and of learning how to be discriminating: i.e. to know when it is appropriate to use the author's words and how to refer to the author. In the initial stage of research, when looking through resource material, students often copy down the exact words (the reasons students have given are: because the words look so good, because it is very hard to find alternative wordings at the spur of the moment, because you

do not know initially what will become a quote, and because copying the exact words is a good way to learn sophisticated English). At the next stage, when the writer is using the notes, the words become less directly linked to the original author, and eventually, they get copied into the final text. To a teacher, these "plagiarized" phrases often stand out in a text a student has written. A strategy for avoiding this tendency involves changing students' procedures for taking notes from written sources, using much more point form and own wordings (using symbols to indicate where to return to for useful quotations).

It is also possible to give students conscious strategies for avoiding this tendency, and at the same time have them develop more confidence in using their own words. One suggestion is to have them read a passage, page or section, and then close the book before writing down their own summary of what was said. (Sometimes students are surprised to find that their own words can also be good.) The following class activity is intended to further help students to develop this ability to avoid using authors' words.

Activity 8B.1: "Referring and Quoting but Not Plagiarizing"

Students bring an article of their choice to class, and their task is to produce a summary of it, one which will arouse the interest of another classmate, using quotations, references, footnotes, but avoiding exact wordings otherwise.

First read it (or a single section). Then turn it over. Then write the ideas from memory, using outshelling and planning points in a tree. Then go back to the article to check. Look for appropriate quotes.

The major project outlined below is intended to integrate the various aspects of the writing process and the various strategies into a single term-long project. An attempt is made to provide detailed feedback at different stages of the overall process.

Activity 8B.2: Major Project: Final Paper and Process Report

The students choose a topic of interest to write a major paper on; this can be a paper that they are doing for another course. While working on this major paper, they keep track of the process they go through while deciding on the topic, while doing the research, and while trying to get the paper written, including the various stages they went through, the problems or blocks they had, and the strategies they used or tried.

Course Development: The Next Steps

At this point in the development of the course, the important question is not "is this the best approach?" but rather "how can the course be made more effective in terms of the course objectives?"

The kinds of feedback which can serve as input for considering this latter question are related to the two target objectives—one related to the process of writing (becoming an unfrustrated, effective writer), and one related to the product (producing clear, effective written work).

Feedback about the development of students' ability to handle the writing tasks comes from the process notes and freewritten reactions done as a part of many course activities. From these, it is possible to get some idea of the insights and discoveries, as well as the frustrations and difficulties, that the students experience as the course progresses. Feedback about the improvement in the work that the students produce comes from a comparison (in terms of a number of criteria: clarity of focus, organizational clarity, sentence clarity, format, surface errors, overall impression) of passages, essays and reports produced early in the course with those produced towards the end. From this comparison, it is possible to get an idea of the specific areas in which the students' work has or has not improved.

Among the different aspects of the writing process, some were immediately seized upon by the students and the associated strategies easily integrated. Others were strongly resisted, and the students found the associated strategies difficult to learn.

One aspect, which, although new to most of the students, seemed to be very easy to grasp and to integrate, was the notion of using conscious strategies for getting ideas: including clustering, freewriting, idea searching. In fact, many students began to adopt these strategies for papers and exams in other courses. Not all students accepted all of the strategies—some rejected outright one strategy as being quite useless while accepting and freely using another. Occasionally seemingly subtle differences were crucial. One student found tree diagrams confining and counterproductive until she stopped using boxes to bound each node; suddenly trees became very useful. Another student found both tree diagrams and clusters quite meaningless until he discovered that you can cluster later in the process for particular sub-nodes of the tree; only then, with some clear direction to the clustering, did it become useful.

The aspect of the writing process which seemed to be the most difficult for students to integrate was i) exploring deeper layers of meaning (both accepting that you might not know yet yourself what you really want to mean, and trying to find it out), ii) linking these deeper layers to the surface level of words and sentences, and iii) realizing when the links are not clear, and that the reader is getting a different message from what you intend.

Within this overall area, however, certain activities worked well. The "*Balloons*" activity, for example, seems to give most students a profound jolt, and has subsequently become a point of reference for dealing with interpretation problems. But further activities should be developed to give the students the need and desire to play with their "raw" ideas, to allow them to develop, and to enjoy giving and getting feedback about them.

Another aspect of the writing process which students seemed to find difficult (as evidenced both by their process notes and by the final drafts they handed in) was the detailed

work on surface errors. The students were very enthused about being advised of their surface errors by the teacher, and sometimes surprised to discover that they could correct those errors themselves, but they often lost interest before they became adept in doing their own editing. I have not yet succeeded in giving them the need or the desire to discover, examine and play with the surface level of their work. Nevertheless, an occasional spark of surface level sensitivity during some of the activities makes me think that there may be ways to provide the support and excitement that would be needed to achieve this.

From the students' point of view, the most frequently verbalized benefit to the course was the attention they received on writing problems that no one had ever discussed with them before: the problems they had *while* writing. From my point of view, the most exciting part of focussing on the process of writing was the corresponding focus on the process of teaching. Many of the activities, because they encourage the learner to verbalize what s/he is going through, inherently produce feedback about the learning and hence about the course. The kinds of process notes which the students keep, and the kinds of in-class discussions which result provide constant feedback about the successes and difficulties that the students are having. While the students are getting feedback related to different aspects of the writing process, I am getting feedback related to different aspects of the learning/teaching process.

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Target Objectives:

- 1) productive unfrustrated writers
- 2) clear effective work

Enabling Objectives:

awareness of:

strategies for:

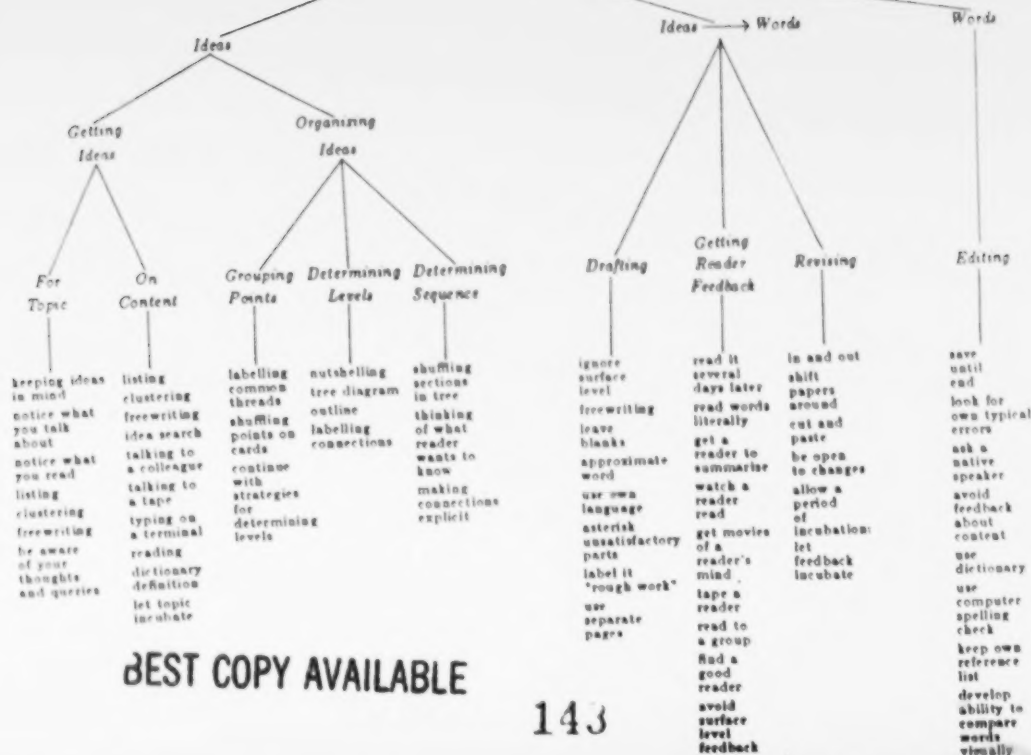
Course Units:

Activities:



APPENDIX A
Objectives, Units, Activities

THE WRITING PROCESS



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APPENDIX C-1

The Left Brain-Right Brain Metaphor

APPENDIX C-2

Implicit-Explicit Information

Being Implicit:
 implying ideas,
 relationships, intentions
 Risk of incomprehensibility

Being Explicit:
 clearly stating ideas,
 relationships, intentions
 Risk of boredom



APPENDIX D Logsheet of Misunderstandings

LOGSHEET OF INTERACTIONS WITH POTENTIAL FOR COMMUNICATIVE MISUNDERSTANDINGS

What first person said (oral or written)	Comments about interpretation	What second person said	Comments about interpretation
1. <u>me</u> why? why are you standing here? I mean why did you change lunch?	(a fellow that I know, one day I saw him change lunch on the capharna) (I said the word "why" in a relatively under voice)	<u>him</u> pardon. I beg your pardon. pardon do get some food oh! I'm sorry. Because food is available here	(probably he didn't hear me.) (I thought I asked why he was on the capharna)
2. <u>Paul</u> See you later! short pause Hi me. I just want to be your office sometime in the future	(we were leaving together) (he didn't know why I asked why)	<u>Me</u> when? Till me, when do you want to see me today?	(I thought he wanted to see me later that day) (I thought he didn't hear me, so I repeated)
3. <u>Me</u> (looking at a big blue box) here's a hundred for your beef! Me This is a good example of a potential misunderstanding!	(in a McDonald's restaurant)	<u>my friend</u> There's only the hamburger at \$1.11 100% beef? Maybe it means that that is only 100% beef in amount other things in the hamburger	

(examples taken from students work)

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SURFACE ERROR LOGSHEET

Name: _____

First Language: _____

My version	Possible reformulation	Reason for difference
<u>in</u> Friday	on Friday	"in" as not correct for day
<u>textbook</u>	textbook	spelling: missing 't'
I <u>was</u> seldom talk	I seldom talked	past tense, not passive - don't use "was"
If the culture shock of newcomers is ... , <u>he</u> will ...	If the culture shock of newcomers is ... , they will	pronoun must be plural because it refers to a plural word
my <u>vocabularies</u> are weak	my vocabulary is weak	vocabulary is not a countable noun
<u>cultural</u> shock	culture shock	inappropriate expression
it is <u>hardly</u> to determine	it is hard to determine	need an adjective after "is", "ly" is adverb
he <u>contacts</u> with different tradition in foreign country	he comes into contact with a different tradition in a foreign country	inappropriate expression article missing article missing
I <u>didn't realized</u>	I didn't realize	verb tense agreement
My father is an engineer and he hopes that at least one of his sons will <u>choose</u> it as a career	My father is an engineer and he hopes that at least one of his sons will choose engineering as a career	"it" does not refer to any previous word in the sentence

(examples taken from students' work)

APPENDIX E
Surface Error Logsheet

The Use of Reformulation in Teaching Writing to FSL Students

Razika Sanaoui

*Department of French
and
Centre for Applied Language Studies
Carleton University*

In the teaching of creative writing to beginning students of French as a Second Language, the use of the reformulation technique (as defined by Cohen 1982, 1983) has proved to be particularly effective. After describing the context in which I have employed it and after explaining the procedures of reformulation, I will report on its effects on the students' writing. I will point out the patterns which emerged in the development of better writers and poorer writers. In the last part of this paper I will discuss reasons for the effectiveness of this technique.

In these classes, the creative writing consists of a series of stages spread over several short sessions. Learners select a topic, discuss it with peers, write a first draft which they revise with the help of these peers, then submit it to their instructor for a first reading. After revising again according to further suggestions, editing and proofreading, students hand in a final copy which is published and shared with the rest of the class. An important part of learning how to write takes

place during the discussion prior to the writing as well as during the revision process and the sharing session. This learning occurs through conferencing with fellow students, discussing problems, revising processes with them and finally through appreciating or criticizing compositions after they have been shared. Therefore, learning to write takes place primarily through the medium of talk.

Learning Procedure

The reformulation procedure consists of rewriting the students' entire compositions. Secondly, it consists of presenting the learners with their own composition as well as the rewritten piece, and finally, asking them to observe and list any significant differences between the two versions. As they move through the pieces, students focus on three key questions:

- 1) Is there a significant change?
- 2) How is it made?
- 3) What is its effect?

When faced with this task for the first time however, weaker students need further guidance as to the focus of their comparisons, so it is suggested that they direct their attention towards elements such as:

- a -selection of vocabulary
- b -choice of syntactic structures
- c -cohesive devices
- d -discourse functions
- e -overall organization
- f -stance towards the reader.

Reformulation Procedure

These six aspects of the writing are the main elements in which changes are made during reformulation. a) Changes in the selection of vocabulary may modify the degree of formality, precision and conciseness depending on the type of

task at hand. In some cases for example, this type of change may consist of a systematic transposition of all lexical items which are associated with spoken language into those which are associated with formal written language.

b) Changes in syntactic structures may consist of using more complex sentences, varying complex and less complex structures and ordering these grammatical patterns to stress meaning. In the reformulated piece students are provided with techniques for avoiding repetition of the same structures. The syntactic structures employed by the teacher in order to combine and improve the learners' simple sentences include both these which the students may already know but have failed to use and those which they don't know. It is interesting to note here that this implicit teaching of sentence structure produces immediate results as students notice the new grammatical patterns and learn about their underlying rules when they attempt to imitate these patterns. For instance, in one of my classes relative clauses introduced by 'qui' and 'que', which were not previously taught, began to appear in all the students' writing immediately after they were introduced in the first reformulated process.

c) Changes regarding cohesive devices are related to the use of intra and intersentential markers of cohesion. In most cases, students at the beginning level fail to use connectors, conjunctions, reference, etc. The addition of such cohesive devices makes the learners progressively aware of the need for greater cohesion in writing.

d) Changes regarding discourse functions consist in employing more sophisticated means of realizing functions such as questioning, defining, hypothesizing, etc. In reformulating students' attempts to realize these (attempts which often result in unwanted tone and effect or shift in register,) the teacher provides better ways of realizing them.

e) Changes in overall organization focus on the lay-out of the piece (title, introduction, conclusion, paragraphing,

etc.) and aim at developing students' awareness of writing conventions. This might consist of adding a title or an introductory sentence for example or replacing "fin" (the end) by a concluding sentence. As well, these changes affect the organization of different parts and ideas in relation to the whole piece.

f) Changes in the written text in terms of stance towards the reader stress the type of information required by the reader in order to understand the text. Sometimes, for example, details in the text must be elaborated to form separate units.

During the reading and observing sessions described earlier, all students gained insights into all these different aspects of the written language, which they then attempted to transfer to the writing of their subsequent compositions. In order to find out if there was any transfer I observed and noted changes in student papers. The following chart shows categories where instances of change were observed, as well as the percentage of students who made such changes.

The chart shows that all students have made changes in several areas which are discussed below. However, it is of course difficult to claim that they result solely from reformulation. In their later essays, students showed significant improvement in the area of vocabulary and they have particularly become aware of the degrees of formality. They have been sensitized to appropriateness and register. They have also acquired new and more complex structures which allow them to express and combine a greater number of ideas per sentence rather than produce a series of simple statements. As well, they employed markers of cohesion in order to explicitly indicate the relationship between sentences and ideas. Finally, they improved the lay-out of their pieces and their overall organization. All these elements result in a product whose quality differs greatly from the writing they initially produced.

*Categories in which
Differences were Observed:*

*Percentage
of Students:*

a) Selection of Vocabulary	
- precision	50%
- conciseness	50%
- degree of formality/informality, differences in register	100%
b) Syntactic Structures	
- use of more complex structures (adjective clauses and phrases; adverb clauses and phrases; noun clauses; embedding)	100%
- ordering and varying complex and less complex structures	30%
c) Markers of Cohesion	
- within sentences	100%
- across sentences	80%
- across paragraphs (coordination and contrast, conjunctions, pronouns, lexical items, etc.)	100%
d) Discourse Functions	
- identifying different and better means of performing functions such as questioning, defining, hypothesizing, etc.	20%
e) Overall Organisation	
- organisation of different parts and ideas of the piece	100%
- lay-out of the piece (title, introduction, conclusion, paragraphing, etc.)	100%
f) Stance Towards Reader	
- awareness of audience, providing extra information, etc.	20%

Characteristics of Better and Poorer Writers

Noticeable differences emerged between the better writers and the poorer writers:

1) Better writers tended to incorporate a great number of new elements into their subsequent compositions whereas poorer writers only used a limited number at any one time although they were exposed to as many differences as the better ones.

2) Better writers tended to use new structures in a variety of appropriate ways while poorer students often overused the ones they had acquired.

3) Better writers showed improvement at all levels whereas poorer ones' progress was limited to two areas: the syntactic and lexical.

In general, these differences seemed to emerge from differences in attitude towards the reformulated pieces. Better writers perceived them as examples of more generalized principles which allowed them to feel more exploratory with language. Poorer writers focused on the models as such and simply attempted to reproduce them. As well, better writers perceived the reformulated piece as a whole and were therefore able to abstract more global features (such as attitude to the reader for example). Poorer writers focused on surface level features, and consequently could only improve at levels which were obvious to them (vocabulary and syntax).

Discussion

The effectiveness of this technique is due to several factors. First of all, it generates a great deal of motivation because it sets up a personalized reading task during which the students read well written texts based on their own experience and their own writing. An alternative to reformulating their writing, which consists of presenting them with pieces writ-

ten by native speakers on the same topic, does not stimulate them in such a manner.

Furthermore, students are offered models of syntactic and lexical choices as well as choices of style, appropriateness and rhetorical functions. This is not possible to do by simply identifying their syntactic or lexical errors or by rephrasing isolated phrases or sentences. In the latter case, the student's final copy consists of a mixture of teacher and student writing, a mixture which is more likely to puzzle the learner than to offer him appropriate models.

As well, reformulation tends to make students aware that their writing doesn't express all of the meaning that they intend. In the reformulated version, students are given linguistic tools used by a native speaker to help them express their intended meaning. Some of these tools are new to them, some of them are not; in the latter case students have just failed to put them to use.

Other reasons for the effectiveness of this technique are that learners can diagnose areas which need improving by comparing the two versions. They are also given the opportunity to assess the level of writing proficiency they have reached, compared to native fluency. This type of self-evaluation appears to be more meaningful than the grade received.

In conclusion, it seems to me that although there are differences between better writers and poorer writers, all students have benefited from the use of the reformulation approach and that the results obtained over a short period of time surpass results I have achieved with other students through any type of explicit or direct instruction in teaching creative writing. I suppose that this method would be even more valuable in dealing with advanced students whose writing is quite close to the proficiency of native writers, but it certainly is quite an effective approach which maximizes

beginners' awareness of the written language and of the appropriate directions their writing ought to take.

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Simulation or Reality?

A Group Project in Writing

Alister Cumming

*Centre for Applied Language Studies
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While the worth of role-plays and problem solving activities has long been recognized in the literature on language teaching (Hodgson 1972, Maley and Duff 1978, Ur 1981), very little documentation exists to describe the potential uses of group simulations in language instruction. A fixed repertoire of rather simple simulations structured around exceptionally fantastic situations (Lost on the Moon, Shipwrecked on a Desert Island, Fallout Shelter) (Taylor 1982) appear to be stock items in the ESL teacher's grab bag of instructional techniques. Typically, these activities emphasize oral interactions amongst groups of learners who might negotiate towards a group consensus during a few hours of classroom study. Their pedagogical virtues are (somewhat vaguely) justified on the grounds that simulations "can reduce the artificiality of the classroom, provide a reason for talking, and allow the learner to talk meaningfully to other learners" (Sturtridge 1981: 126). Beyond this, we have seen few descriptions of educational endeavours which relate role-play simulations to, say, the teaching of specific language functions (as in Candlin, Burton, Leather and Woods 1981), 'authentic' communicative interactions (Breen 1982), the contextual

constraints which make 'writing process' techniques meaningful (Britton 1970: 141-149), or (as in this paper) relevant situational data in the learners' environment.

The simulation described here was conducted with a small group of learners who participated in a course for second language students of English registered in regular degree programmes at Carleton University during the summer of 1983. The activities were devised to suit the diverse interests of six students with readily identifiable academic goals as well as to adhere to the course's aims of offering instruction in forms of writing typical of an academic setting. In general terms, the simulation was a project which asked students to prepare a joint report documenting the university's contributions to the local community. Specifically, the technique of group-simulation achieved a variety of instructional objectives simultaneously. The tasks required to complete the project possessed mechanisms to promote the students' assumption of responsibilities for: compilation of appropriate data, delivery of oral reports, consideration of purpose and effect while composing a research report, group-conferencing, revision of drafts, documentation of sources, and peer-editing (see Figure 1).

The simulation was carried out over two weeks, centering around classes which met on alternate weekdays for periods of two hours. On the first day, the participants each received copies of a fictitious letter addressed to them from the president of the university (see Appendix A) requesting that the recipients of the letters form a committee to prepare a joint report on the university's contributions to the local community. The president's letter outlined a tentative working schedule for the committee to follow, designated the class's teacher as an advisor for consultation during the committee meetings, and imparted a heightened significance to the project by attaching a (fictitious) memorandum from the Minister of Education (see Appendix B) which threatened

Figure 1:
Overview of the Simulation

	Class Activities	Learning Behaviour
Week One		
1.	- introduction of task - formation of student committee to plan for execution of project	- interpretation of task - development of strategies for data collection
2.	- initial progress reports on data collection - discussion of problems common to committee members	- sharing of information about processes for collecting data - decision-making on the types of data appropriate for the project
3.	- second progress reports - discussion of uniform format	- decision-making on the format and content of individual reports
Week Two		
4.	- submission of rough drafts of individual reports - peer reading of drafts - consensus on suggestions after revisions	- revision techniques and strategies - refinement and appreciation of content in relation to form and purpose
5.	- submission of revised drafts - peer reading of drafts - consensus on further suggestions for revisions	- revision techniques and strategies - refinement and appreciation of content in relation to form and purpose
6.	- submission of final copies of individual reports - proofreading of peers' reports - compiling into joint-report	- proofreading techniques and strategies

closure of the university unless she received a report which could persuade her against such action. The advisor/teacher suggested the participants organize a committee by electing a chairperson and a recording secretary who would direct the group to consider their interpretations of the scope of the task, to recommend procedures for collecting appropriate data, and to compose a memorandum to the president of the university indicating how the committee intended to undertake the task. The participants decided to prepare individual reports representing the perspectives of their various faculties and to compose these later into the joint report.

At the next meeting the committee reconvened to discuss mutual accomplishments and difficulties in obtaining source documents and data. Each committee member contributed an oral 'progress report' on their efforts, which proved valuable to other individuals who had perhaps not discovered such potential sources as the university's archives, annual reports, or information offices. In addition to sharing strategies for the collection of printed data, participants decided to interview the chairmen or advisors in their respective departments at the university in order to elicit details on certain common points like the number of staff employed, research projects recently undertaken, and consultancy services offered.

At the third session greater emphasis was placed on the appropriateness of the data to the purposes of the project. A number of points presented by individuals in their second progress reports were deemed unnecessary or irrelevant by other members of the committee. For instance, financial statements produced by one student were dismissed by another since the "president" of the university had indicated he would handle this matter. Discussions focused on the necessity for each report to contain roughly equivalent types and quantities of information in order for the joint report to cohere effectively. The committee reached a consensus on a

uniform format for the presentation of material in each report so as to direct their preparation of written drafts for the following meeting. The committee chairmen listed categories of items on a blackboard; the appropriateness of each was debated until an agreement was established that the categories of departmental background, employment, community services, consulting services, research, and publications would make a suitable basis for organizing individual reports. By this point, each person had collected sufficient data to meet the satisfaction of their peers as well as the constraints of the task, each had experienced opportunities to articulate and organize material for an interested audience, and each had developed this material to accommodate any alterations in content or emphasis suggested by their fellow participants.

The second week of simulation concentrated on activities of writing, revising, and editing. In the fourth meeting each member of the committee read the initial drafts of reports written by other committee-members. Recommendations for development, re-organization or clarification were made by the participants. Since many of the drafts were in relatively rough forms, the authors took this opportunity to voice their intentions concerning further development of their work, taking special notice of the techniques used by peers who had produced comparatively more successful efforts. In the fifth session, more peer-editing and suggestions for revisions of second drafts took place. As the image of the report in its entirety was becoming more evident to the participants, students were prompted to focus further on the need for a uniform pattern of organization in individual papers. The importance of co-operative effort in determining the successful completion of the project became a justification and stimulus for students to produce 'editorial' comments recommending improvements in others' papers.

At the final meeting, members of the committee organized themselves in pairs to studiously proof-read the final copies

of the reports. When a pair was unable to reach agreement on a possible correction or alteration, the committee's advisor/teacher was consulted to arbitrate the decision. A subcommittee was later formed to compose a covering letter to the president of the university announcing the project's completion. The representative from the Department of Mathematics was called upon to arrange the individual papers in numerical sequence. The joint report was typed verbatim from the students' papers by office staff in the following week and copies were distributed to all interested parties. Minor errors which appeared in the final text formed a basis for 'remedial' instruction in later classes. (For a sample page from the completed project, see Appendix C.)

From a methodological perspective this simulation concentrated class attention on a single project which consisted of various tasks that appeared to encourage individual development in writing. The stimulus for the project was sufficiently believable, realistic, and engaging to motivate students to collect appropriate material, to write convincingly, and to improve their writing to meet these ends. As a result of the tasks, individuals had chances to find out more about their fields of academic specialization and the relationship of these fields to the university and local community. They also took pride in their personal and collaborative accomplishments and discoveries. The framework for group activities promoted a classroom atmosphere where problem-solving and consensus-establishing evolved spontaneously, permitting learners to build upon their peers' contributions as well as to experiment with, sound out, and confer on their own efforts.¹ Above all, the simulation directed learners toward assuming roles as compilers of information, composers, editors, critics, and proof-readers—roles they were able to

¹ See, for instance, Crowhurst 1981, Graves 1983, or Judy and Judy 1981 on writing workshops; Witbeck 1976 or Zamel 1982 on peer revision and writing 'process' techniques for ESL students; Courteney 1982 for a rationale of drama-oriented procedures to teaching.

perceive as integral to the preparation of any 'real' written assignment they might encounter.

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APPENDIX A

Stimulus A

Carleton University
Ottawa, Canada K1S 5B6

SIMULATION

August 2, 1983

Dear:

I am writing to ask if you could act as a representative on the committee now being formed to prepare a joint report requested by the Ontario Ministry of Education on Carleton University's contributions to "the education, welfare and betterment of the Ottawa community". Please find enclosed a copy of a memorandum recently sent to me by the Minister of Education, which I believe should impress upon you the urgency and significance of this task.

I have arranged for you to meet with the five other persons invited to form this committee on August 3rd, at 2:00 p.m. in Paterson Hall, Room 236. I suggest that you prepare a tentative working plan on this date, outlining how the committee will proceed in researching and documenting this information. If each member could contribute a progress report on August 5th, a draft report on August 8th, then completed individual reports on August 10th, I am sure that you will be able to compile and edit the individual reports on the latter date in order to meet the deadline of August 12th for a joint report.

The committee will probably wish to concentrate on gathering information from library and departmental sources. Limitations of time will prohibit the compilation of a thoroughly detailed report; however, adequate resources exist to allow for the preparation of a general statement, and each member of the committee should be able to work from the perspective of his or her department's role at the university.

...2



Carleton University
Ottawa, Canada K1S 5B6

-2-

I extend my apologies for not being able to work directly with this committee, as the Ministry of Education has also requested that my office prepare a report on the state of the university's finances.

Mr. Alister Cumming of the Centre for Applied Language Studies has been designated to advise the committee during its proceedings as well as to accept the final report in my absence.

Thanking you in advance,

Sincerely,

P.W. Smithson
President,
Carleton University

c.c. Ayoub Ayoub, Engineering
Irene Corbin, Social Work
Rosa Maria Bruno, Spanish
Ana Isabel Guada, Sociology
Adel Fanny Mikhail, Mathematics
Keiko Sueuchi, Political Science

APPENDIX B
Stimulus B

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MINISTRY OF EDUCATION
GOVERNMENT OF ONTARIO

MEMORANDUM

SIMULATION

DATE: July 25, 1983

TO: Mr. P.W. Smithson, President,
Carleton University

FROM: Ms. Hildegard Right,
Minister of Education,
Province of Ontario



RE: OPERATION OF CARLETON UNIVERSITY

Following conversations of July 22 with your office and the staff of the Ministry of Education, plans have been implemented which will result in the cessation of further operations at Carleton University by September 1st, 1983 unless evidence of the university's role in contributing to the education, welfare and betterment of the Ottawa community can be documented before August 12th of this year.

I suggest that you request the formation of a committee (possibly consisting of representatives from the areas of Sociology, Social Work, Engineering, Mathematics, Political Science and Foreign Language Teaching) to issue a joint report detailing the services which these areas of academic study contribute toward the general population.

APPENDIX C

*Sample from the Completed Project*INTRODUCTION

This report is prepared according to the request of Mr. Ayoub Ayoub, Chairman of the committee established by P.W. Smithson, President of Carleton University, under the purpose for examining the contribution of Carleton University to the community of Ottawa. My enrollment in this committee is to analyze, in particular, the role of the Department of Political Science in the capital community. This paper is mainly based on the records at the Archives of Macdoram Library (Carleton University), interviews from a graduate secretary and graduates in the department.

This Department of Political Science works on two major functions as a public institution: promoting the research in the field of Political Science, and educating students in courses.

The department is constituted of three levels: under graduate, M.A., and Ph.D courses. In the year of 1982-83, 147 students were in the undergraduate program as full-time students, and 29 students as part-time. In the graduate school combining M.A. and Ph. D. courses, there were 68 students who registered as full-time.

The academic program of the department covers the courses in five fields: Canadian Politics, Comparative Politics, Political Theory, International Relations and Public Administration. These programs include theoretical, empirical, philosophical and quantitative approaches. Also there are interdisciplinary courses for area studies.

EMPLOYMENT

In the department, there are 41 professors. Also there are usually some foreign professors sent under international exchange programs. For the administration of the department, there are 11 secretaries.

For supporting the study of graduates as well as preparing for their career, the department gives lectureship, Teaching Assistant and Research Assistant systems. Some Ph. D. candidates started teaching courses on undergraduate level. For example, Alex Netherton, who had finished the qualification of Ph. D. program, taught the course of Inter-governmental Relations on 300 level last semester.

People who finished the graduate program at the department, in particular those got Ph. D. degree, found teaching jobs at universities including Carleton. Some of the graduates went into public service. Hence, a certain number of people from Political Science at Carleton still stay in Ottawa for their work.¹

SERVICE PROVIDED BY THE DEPARTMENT

a) Studies and Research

Many pieces of work relating to the community of Ottawa have been done by the faculties in the department. This scholarship...

